

T R A V E L S
THROUGH
S Y R I A A N D E G Y P T.
VOL. II.

1872
B. C. C.

Appleton

T R A V E L S

THROUGH

SYRIA AND EGYPT,

IN THE YEARS 1783, 1784, AND 1785.

CONTAINING

The present Natural and Political State of those Countries; their Productions, Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce; with Observations on the Manners, Customs, and Government of the TURKS and ARABS.

ILLUSTRATED WITH COPPER PLATES.

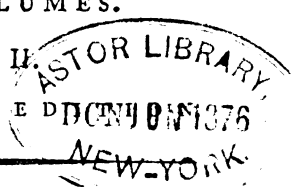
By M. C—F. VOLNEY.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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NOTED

JOHN
FARMER

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E G Y P T A N D S Y R I A.

S T A T E O F S Y R I A.

C H A P. XXIV.

S E C T. I.

Of the Ansarians.

THE first people who should be distinguished from the rest of the inhabitants of Syria among those who employ themselves in cultivation, are those, called in that country by the plural name Ansaria, in Delisle's maps stiled Ensyrians, and, in those of Danville, Nassaris. The territory occupied by these Ansaria is that chain of mountains which extends from Antakia to the rivulet called *Nabr-el-Kabir*, or the Great River. The history of their origin, though little known, is yet instructive: I shall give it in

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the

the words of a writer who has drawn his materials from the best authorities (a).

“ In the year of the Greeks 1202, (A. D. 891), there lived at the village of *Nasar* in the environs of Koufa, an old man, who, from his fastings, his continual prayers, and his poverty, passed for a saint: several of the common people declaring themselves his partizans, he selected from among them twelve disciples to propagate his doctrine. But the magistrate of the place, alarmed at his proceedings, seized the old man, and confined him in prison. In this reverse of fortune, his situation excited the pity of a girl who was slave to the goaler, and she determined to give him his liberty. An opportunity soon offered to effect her design. One day, when the goaler was gone to bed intoxicated, and in a profound sleep, she gently took the keys from under his pillow, and, after opening the door to the old man, returned them to their place unperceived by her master: the next day, when the gaoler went to visit his prisoner, he was extremely astonished at finding he

— (a) Affemani, *Bibliothèque orientale*.

“ had

“ had made his escape, and the more so
 “ since he could perceive no marks of
 “ violence. He therefore judiciously con-
 “ cluded he had been delivered by an angel,
 “ and eagerly spread the report, to avoid the
 “ reprehension he merited; the old man, on
 “ the other hand, asserted the same thing to
 “ his disciples, and preached his doctrines
 “ with more earnestness than ever. He
 “ even wrote a book, in which, among other
 “ things, he says: *I, such a one, of the village*
 “ *of Nasar, have seen Christ, who is the word of*
 “ *God, who is Ahmad, son of Mohammad, son*
 “ *of Hanafa, of the race of Ali; who also is*
 “ *Gabriel, and he said to me: Thou art he who*
 “ *readeth, (with understanding,) thou art the*
 “ *man who speaketh truth; thou art the camel*
 “ *which preserveth the faithful from wrath;*
 “ *thou art the beast which carrieth their bur-*
 “ *then; thou art the (Hol:) Spirit, and John,*
 “ *the son of Zachary, Go, and preach to men that*
 “ *they make four genuflections in praying; two*
 “ *before the rising of the sun, and two before his*
 “ *setting, turning their faces towards Jerusalem:*
 “ *and let them say, three times: God Almighty,*
 “ *God most high, God most great: let them ob-*
 “ *serve only the second and third festival; let*

“ *them fast but two days annually; let them not*
 “ *wash the prepuce, nor drink beer, but as much*
 “ *wine as they think proper; and, lastly, let them*
 “ *abstain from the flesh of carnivorous animals.*
 “ This old man, passing into Syria, propa-
 “ gated his opinions among the lower orders
 “ of the country people, numbers of whom
 “ believed in him. And, after a few years,
 “ he went away, and nobody ever knew what
 “ became of him.”

Such was the origin of these Ansarians, who
 are, for the most part, inhabitants of the
 mountains before mentioned. A little more
 than a century after this, the crusaders, carry-
 ing the war into these countries, and, march-
 ing from Marrah, along the Orontes, towards
 Lebanon, fell in with some of these *Nasiri-
 reans*, a great number of whom they slew.
 William of Tyre (*b*), who reports this fact,
 confounds them with the *Assassins*, and pos-
 sibly they might have resembled each other;
 as to what he adds, that the Franks, as well
 as the Arabs, employed the term *assassins*,
 without being able to give any account of its
 origin; it is a problem easy of solution. Haf-

(*b*) Lib. xx. chap. 30.

assin

EGYPT AND SYRIA.

faſſin (*c*); in the vulgar Arabic, ſignifies *Robbers of the night*; perſons who *lie in ambuſh to kill*; and is ſtill underſtood in this ſenſe at Cairo, and in Syria; for which reaſon it was applied to the Batanians, who ſlew by ſurpriſe. The cruſaders, who happened to be in Syria at the time this practice was moſt frequent, muſt have adopted the uſe of the term in queſtion. What they have related of the old man of the mountain, is in conſequence of an improper tranſlation of the phraſe *Shaik-el-Djebal*, which ſignifies *Lord of the mountains*, the title the Arabs gave to the chief of the Batenians, whoſe reſidence was to the eaſt of Kourd-eſtan, in the mountains of the ancient Media.

The Anſarians are, as I have ſaid, divided into ſeveral tribes or ſects; among which we diſtinguiſh the Shamiſia; or adorers of the ſun; the Kelbia, or worſhippers of the dog, and the Kadmouſia, who, as I am aſſured, pay a particular homage to that part in women, which correſponds to the Priapus (*d*).

B 3

M.

(*c*) The root *haſſ*, with an aſpirated *h*, ſignifies to kill, to aſſaſſinate, to liſten, to ſurpriſe; but the compound *hâſſâs* is not to be found in Golius.

(*d*) I am aſſured, likewise, that they hold nocturnal aſſemblies,

M. Niebuhr, to whom the same circumstances were related as to me, could not believe them, because, says he, it is not probable that mankind should *so far* degrade themselves; but this mode of reasoning is contradicted, both by the history of all nations, which proves how capable the human mind is of the most extravagant excesses, and even by the present state of almost all countries, especially of the eastern world, where we meet with a degree of ignorance and credulity sufficient to receive the most palpable absurdities. The whimsical superstitions I have mentioned, may the rather be believed still to exist among the Ansarians, as they seem to have been preserved there by a regular transmission from those antient times in which they are known to have prevailed. Historians remark that, notwithstanding the vicinity of Antioch, Christianity penetrated with the greatest difficulty into these countries; very few profelytes were made here, even after the reign of Julian: and from that

semblies, in which, after certain discourses, they extinguish the lights, and indulge promiscuous lust, as has been reported of the ancient Gnostics.

period

period to the invasion of the Arabs there was not much time for its establishment. In fact, revolutions in opinion seldom take place so readily in the provinces as in great cities, where the facility of communication diffuses new ideas with more rapidity, so that they are soon either universally received or entirely exploded. The progress made by Christianity, among these rude mountaineers, could only serve to prepare the way for Mahometanism, more suitable to their habits and inclinations; and to this absurd medley of ancient and modern doctrines the old man of Nasar owed his success. One hundred and fifty years after, Mohammed-el-Dourzi having, in his turn, formed a sect, the Ansarians did not admire its principal article, the divinity of the Caliph Hakem: for this reason they remain distinct from the Druzes, though they resemble each other in several points. Many of the Ansarians believe in the Metempsychosis; others reject the immortality of the soul; and, in general, in that civil and religious anarchy, that ignorance and rudeness which prevail among them, these peasants adopt what opinions they think proper, follow-

ing the sect they like best, and, frequently, attaching themselves to none.

Their country is divided into three principal districts, farmed by the chiefs called *Mokaddamin*. Their tribute is paid to the Pacha of Tripoli, from whom they annually receive their title. Their Mountains are in general not so steep as those of Lebanon; and, consequently, are better adapted to cultivation; but they are also more exposed to the Turks, and hence, doubtless, it happens, that, with greater plenty of corn, tobacco, wines, and olives, they are more thinly inhabited than those of their neighbours the Maronites, and the Druzes, of whom I shall next speak.

S E C T. II.

Of the Maronites.

BETWEEN the Ansarians, to the north, and the Druzes to the south, we find an inconsiderable people long known under the name of *Mawarna*, or *Maronites*. Their origin, and

and the minute difference between them and the Latins, of which communion they are, have been much discussed by ecclesiastical writers. All that is worth notice, and known with certainty, concerning them, may be reduced to what follows :

Towards the end of the sixth age of the church, while the spirit of retirement from the world was equally novel and fervid, a hermit, of the name of Maroun, lived on the banks of the Orontes, who, by his fasting, his solitary mode of life, and his austerities, became much respected by the neighbouring people. It seems that, in the disputes which at that time arose between Rome and Constantinople, he employed his credit in favour of the western Christians. His death, far from abating the ardor of his followers, gave new energy to their zeal: it was reported that miracles had been wrought by his remains, and, in consequence, many persons assembled from Kinefrin, from Awafem and other places, who built at Hama a chapel and a tomb whence soon arose a convent, very celebrated in that part of Syria. The quarrels of the two Metropolitan churches encreased, and the whole empire entered warmly

warmly into the dissensions of the priests and princes. Matters were thus situated, when, about the end of the seventh century, a monk, named John the Maronite, obtained, by his talents for preaching, the reputation of being one of the most powerful supporters of the cause of the Latins, or Partisans of the Pope. Their opponents, who espoused the cause of the Emperor, and were therefore named *Melkites*, or Royalists, made at that time great progress in Lebanon. To oppose them with success, the Latins determined to send thither John the Maronite: they presented him, accordingly, to the agent of the Pope, at Antioch, who, after consecrating him Bishop of Djebal, sent him to preach in those countries. John lost no time in rallying his partisans, and in augmenting their number; but, opposed by the intrigues, and even by the open attacks, of the Melkites, thought it necessary to resist force by force; he collected all the Latins, and settled himself with them in Lebanon, where they formed a society independent both with respect to its civil and religious government. This is related by an Historian of the Lower Empire in the following words: “ In the eighth year
“ of

“ of the reign of Constantine Pogonatus,
 “ (A. D. 676), the Mardaites, collecting
 “ themselves together, took possession of
 “ Lebanon, which became the asylum of
 “ vagabonds, slaves, and all sort of rabble.
 “ They grew so powerful there, as to stop
 “ the progress of the Arabs, and to compel
 “ the Caliph Moawia to request of the Geceks
 “ a truce for thirty years, obliging himself
 “ to pay a tribute of fifty horses, one
 “ hundred slaves, and ten thousand pieces
 “ of gold (*e*).”

The name of Mardaites, here used by this Author, is derived from a Syriac word, signifying Rebel, and is opposed to *Mulkites*, or Royalists, which proves both that the Syriac was still in use at that time, and that the schism which rent the empire was as much civil as religious. Besides, it appears that the origin of the two factions, and the existence of an insurrection in these countries, were prior to these times, for, from the first ages of Mahometanism (A. D. 622), mention is made of petty independent princes, one of whom, named Youseph, was sovereign of Djebail;

(*e*) Cedrenus.

and

and the other, called Kefrou, governed the interior parts of the country, which, from him, took the name of *Kefraouen*. We read likewise of another who made an expedition against Jerusalem, and died at a very advanced age at Beskonta (*f*), where he resided. Thus, before Constantine Pogonatus, these mountains were become the refuge of malecontents, or rebels, who fled from the bigotry of the Emperors and their governors. It was doubtless for this reason, and from a similarity in their opinions, that John and his disciples took refuge there; and it was from the ascendancy they acquired, or already possessed, that the whole nation took the name of Maronites, which was less disgraceful than that of Mardaïtes. Be this as it may, John, having established order and military discipline among the Mountaineers, having provided them with arms and leaders, they employed their liberty in combating the common enemies of the empire, and their little state, and, presently, became masters of almost all the mountains as far as Jerusalem. The schism which took place at this juncture among the Mahometans facilitated their conquests. Moawia rebelling

3 (*f*) A village of Kefraouan.

against

against Ali at Damascus, Caliph a Koufa, found himself obliged, in order to avoid being engaged in two wars at once, to make, in 678, a disadvantageous treaty with the Greeks. Seven years after, Abd-el-Malek renewed it with Justinian II. on condition, however, that the Emperor should free him from the Maronites. To this proposal, Justinian had the imprudence to consent, and was base enough to get their chief assassinated by an ambassador, whom the too generous man had received into his house without suspicion of treachery. After this murder, the same agent succeeded so well by his intrigues that he persuaded twelve thousand inhabitants to quit their country, leaving a free passage to the Mahometan arms. Soon after another persecution menaced the Maronites with total ruin; for the same Justinian sent troops against them under Marcian and Mauritius, who destroyed the monastery of Hama, and massacred five hundred monks, after which they carried the war quite into Kefraouan; but, happily, at this moment, Justinian was deposed; when on the point of causing a general massacre in Constantinople; and the Maronites, authorized by his successor, falling upon Maurice, cut his

his army to pieces in an engagement in which he himself perished. From this period we lose sight of them till the invasion of the Crusaders, with whom they were sometimes in alliance, and sometimes at variance. In this interval, of more than three centuries, they lost part of their possessions, and were reduced to their present limits, paying tribute, no doubt, as often as the Arabian or Turkman governors were able to compel them. This was the case with the Caliph of Egypt, Hakem-Bámr-Ellah, who, about the year 1014, ceded their territory to a Turkman, Prince of Aleppo. Two hundred years after, Selah-el-din having driven out the Europeans from this country, they were obliged to submit to his power, and purchase peace by contributions. At this period, that is about the year 1215, the Maronites effected a reunion with Rome, from which they never were widely separated, and which still subsists. William of Tyre, who relates this, observes, that they had forty thousand men able to bear arms. The peace they enjoyed under the Mamlouks was disturbed by Selim the Second, but this prince, occupied by more important objects, did not take the trouble to subject them

them. This negligence emboldened them; and, in concert with the Druzes, and their Emir, the celebrated Faker-el-din, they made daily encroachments on the Ottomans; but these commotions had an unfortunate issue; for Amurath the Third, sending against them Ibrahim, Pacha of Cairo, that General reduced them to obedience, in 1588, and subjected them to the annual tribute they still pay.

Since that period, the Pachas, desirous of extending their authority and extortions, have frequently attempted to introduce their garisons and Agas into the mountains of the Maronites; but being constantly repulsed, they have been compelled to abide by their treaties. The subjection of the Maronites therefore only consists in the payment of a tribute to the Pacha of Tripoli, of whom they hold their country, which he annually farms out to one or more Shaiks (*g*), that is to say, persons of eminence and property, who assign their respective shares to the dis-

(*g*) In the mountains, the word Shaik signifies, properly, a man of property, or country gentleman.

tricts and villages. This impost is levied, chiefly, on the Mulberry-trees and vineyards, which are the principal, and almost the sole objects of culture. It varies according to the seasons, and the resistance they can make to the Pacha. Customhouses are established likewise in the maritime towns, such as Djebail, and Batroun; but the produce of these is but inconsiderable.

The form of government is not founded on any express convention, but merely on usages and customs. This inconvenience would, doubtless, long ere this, have produced disagreeable effects, but for the intervention of many fortunate circumstances. The principal of these is religion, which, placing an insurmountable barrier between the Maronites and the Mahometans, has prevented ambitious men from leaguings themselves with foreigners to enslave their countrymen. The second is the nature of the country, which, every where affording strong defences, enables every village, and almost every family, to oppose, by its single force, all usurpation of sovereign power. A third reason may be derived even from the weakness of this society, which, having always been surrounded by
powerful

powerful enemies, has only been able to resist them by maintaining union among its members, which union can only exist by abstaining from oppressing each other, and by reciprocally guarding the safety of each others person and property. Thus the government preserves itself in a natural equilibrium, and, customs supplying the place of laws, the Maronites are, to this day, equally strangers to the oppression of despotism, and the disorders of anarchy.

The nation may be considered as divided into two classes; the common people and the Shaiks, by which must be understood the most eminent of the inhabitants, who, from the antiquity of their families, and the opulence of their fortunes, are superior to the ordinary class. They all live dispersed in the mountains, in villages, hamlets, and even detached houses; which is never the case in the plains. The whole nation consists of cultivators. Every man improves the little domain he possesses, or farms, with his own hands. Even the Shaiks live in the same manner, and are only distinguished from the rest by a bad Peliss, a horse, and a few slight advantages in food and lodging: they all live

VOL II. C frugally,

frugally, without many enjoyments, but also with few wants, as they are little acquainted with the inventions of luxury. In general, the nation is poor, but no one wants necessities; and if beggars are sometimes seen, they come rather from the sea-coast than the country itself. Property is as sacred among them as in Europe, nor do we see there those robberies and extortions so frequent with the Turks. Travellers may journey there, either by night or day, with a security unknown in any other part of the empire, and the stranger is received with hospitality, as among the Arabs; it must be owned, however, that the Mironites are less generous, and rather inclined to the vice of parsimony. Conformably to the doctrines of Christianity, they have only one wife, whom they espouse frequently, without having seen, and, always, without having been much in her company. Contrary to the precepts of that same religion, however, they have admitted, or retained, the Arab custom of retaliation, and the nearest relation of a murdered person is bound to avenge him. From a habit founded on distrust, and the political state of the country, every one, whether Shaik, or peasant, walks continually
armed

armed with a musket and poniards. This is, perhaps, an inconvenience; but this advantage results from it, that they have no novices in the use of arms among them, when it is necessary to employ them against the Turks. As the country maintains no regular troops, every man is obliged to join the army in time of war, and if this militia were well conducted, it would be superior to many European armies. From accounts taken in late years, the number of men, fit to bear arms, amounts to thirty-five thousand. According to the usual mode of computation, this would imply a population of about a hundred and five thousand souls; and, if we add the priests, monks, and nuns, dispersed in upwards of two hundred convents, and the inhabitants of the maritime towns, such as Djebail, Batroun, &c. we cannot suppose it less than a hundred and fifteen thousand.

This number, compared with the extent of the country, which is about a hundred and fifty leagues square, gives seven hundred and sixty inhabitants for each square league; which will not appear a small population, when we consider that great part of

C 2

Lebanon

Lebanon consists only of barren rocks, and that the soil, even where it can be cultivated, produces very little.

In religious matters, the Maronites are dependent on Rome. Though they acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope, their clergy continue, as heretofore, to elect a head, with the title of Batrak, or patriarch of Antioch. Their priests marry, as in the first ages of the church; but their wives must be maidens, and not widows, nor can they marry a second time. They celebrate mass in Syriac, of which the greatest part of them comprehend not a word. The gospel, alone, is read aloud in Arabic, that it may be understood by the people. The communion is administered in both kinds. The Host is a small round loaf, unleavened, of the thickness of a finger, and something larger than a crown piece. On it is the impression of a seal, which is eaten by the priest, who cuts the remainder into small pieces, and, putting them into the cup, administers to each person with a spoon which serves every body. These priests have not, as among us, benefices or stated revenues; but they subsist on the produce of their masses,

masses, the bounty of their hearers, and the labour of their hands. Some of them exercise trades, others cultivate a small piece of land, and all are industriously employed, for the maintenance of their families, and the edification of their flock. Their poverty is recompensed by the great respect which is paid them; their vanity is incessantly flattered; whoever approaches them, whether rich or poor, great or small, is anxious to kiss their hands, which they fail not to present; nor are they pleased that the Europeans withhold this mark of reverence, so repugnant to our manners, though not thought humiliating by the natives, who are accustomed to it from their infancy. In other respects, the ceremonies of the Catholic religion are not performed more publicly, or with less restraint, in Europe than in the Kefraouan. Each village has its chapel and its priest, and each chapel its bell: a thing unheard of in any other part of Turkey. The Maronites are vain of this privilege, and that they may not be deprived of it, will not suffer a Mahometan to live among them. They assume to themselves, also, the privilege of wearing the

Green Turban, which, except in their territories, would cost a Christian his life.

Italy itself has not more bishops than this little corner of Syria; they here still retain the simplicity of the primitive ages; and may be often met on the roads, mounted on a mule, and followed by a single Sacristan. The greater part of them live in convents, where their food and dress does not differ from that of the other monks; nor does their usual revenue exceed fifteen hundred livres, (about sixty-three pounds) which, in this country, where every article of life is cheap, enables them to live comfortably. They, as well as the priests, are chosen from the class of monks; and are generally elected for their pre-eminence in learning, which is not difficult to acquire, since the bulk of the monks and priests know nothing but the catechism and the bible. It is nevertheless remarkable, that these two subordinate classes are more amiable in their manners, and live more edifying lives; while the bishops and the patriarch, on the contrary, constantly engaged in cabals, disputes of precedence, and religious distinctions, throw the whole country into commotion. Under pretext of exercising

exercising ecclesiastical discipline, according to the ancient rules of the church, they mutually excommunicate each other, and their respective adherents; they suspend priests, interdict the monks, and inflict public penance on the laity; in a word, they have retained the turbulent and intriguing spirit, which was the scourge of the Lower Empire. The court of Rome, frequently embarrassed by their disputes, strives to pacify them, in order to preserve the only asylum of her power remaining in these countries. It is not long since she was obliged to interpose in a singular affair, an account of which may give some idea of the character of the Maronites.

About the year 1735, there was, in the neighbourhood of the Jesuit Missionaries, a Maronite girl, named Hendia, whose extraordinary mode of life began to attract the attention of the people. She fasted, wore the hair-cloth, possessed the gift of tears; and, in a word, had all the exterior of the ancient hermits, and soon acquired a similar reputation. Every body considered her as a model of piety, and many esteemed her a saint. From such a reputation to miracles the

transition is very easy, and, in fact, it was soon reported that she worked miracles. To have a proper conception of the effects of this report, we must not forget that the state of mens minds, in Lebanon, is nearly the same as in the earliest ages. There were neither infidels therefore, nor wits, nor even doubters. Hendia availed herself of this enthusiasm for the completion of her designs; and, imitating the conduct of her predecessors in the same career, she wished to become the foundress of a new order. In vain does the human heart endeavour to conceal its passions, they are invariably the same; nor does the conqueror differ from the monk; both are alike actuated by ambition and the lust of power; and the pride of pre-eminence displays itself even in the excess of humility. To build the convent, money was necessary; the foundress solicited the pious charity of her followers, whose contributions were so abundant as to enable her, in a few years, to erect two vast stone houses, which could not have cost less than one hundred and twenty thousand livres (five thousand pounds). They are called the Kourket, and are situated on the ridge of a hill, to the north-west of Antoura, commanding,

commanding, to the west, a view of the sea, which is very near, and an extensive prospect, to the south, as far as the road of Bairout, which is four leagues distant. The Kourket soon filled with monks and nuns. The Patriarch for the time being was director-general, other employments, of various kinds, were conferred on the different priests and candidates, to whom one of these houses was allotted. Every thing succeeded as well as could have been wished; it is true that many of the nuns died, but this was imputed to the air, and the real cause was not easy to be discovered. Hendia had reigned over her little kingdom near twenty years, when an unforeseen accident threw every thing into confusion. A factor, travelling from Damascus to Bairout, in the summer, was overtaken by night, near this convent: the gates were shut, the hour unseasonable; and, as he did not wish to give any trouble, he contented himself with a bed of straw, and laid himself down in the outer court, waiting the return of day. He had only slept a few hours, when a sudden noise of doors and bolts awakened him. From one of the doors came out three women, with spades and shovels in their

their hands; who were followed by two men, bearing a long white bundle, which appeared very heavy. They proceeded towards an adjoining piece of ground, full of stones and rubbish, where the men deposited their load, dug a whole into which they put it, and, covering it with earth, trod it down with their feet, after which they all returned to the house. The sight of men with nuns, and this bundle, thus mysteriously buried by night, could not but furnish matter of reflection to the traveller. Astonishment, at first, kept him silent, but, to this, anxiety and fear soon succeeded; he, therefore, hastily set off for Barout at break of day. In this town he was acquainted with a merchant, who, some months before, had placed two of his daughters in the Kourket, with a portion of about four hundred pounds. He went in search of him, still hesitating, yet burning with impatience to relate his adventure. They seated themselves cross-legged, the long pipe was lighted, and coffee brought. The Merchant then proceeded to enquire of his visitor concerning his journey, who answered, he had passed the night near the Kourket. This produced fresh questions, to which he replied by

by further particulars, and, at length, no longer able to contain himself, whispered to his host what he had seen. The merchant was greatly surprized, the circumstance of burying the bundle alarmed him: and the more he considered it the more his uneasiness increased. He knew that one of his daughters was ill, and could not but remark that a great many nuns died. Tormented with these thoughts, he knows not how either to admit or reject the dismal suspicions they occasion; he mounts his horse, and, accompanied by a friend, they repair together to the convent, where he asks to see his daughters;---He is told they are sick; he insists they shall be brought to him; this is angrily refused: and the more he persists, the more peremptory is the refusal, till, his suspicions are converted into certainty. Leaving the convent, in an agony of despair, he went to Dair-el-Kamar; and laid all the circumstances before Saad, Kiaya (g) of prince Yousef, chief of the mountain. The Kiaya was greatly astonished, and ordered a body of horse to accompany him, and, if refused

(g) The title of the minister of these petty princes.

admission,

admission, to force the convent; the Kadi took part with the merchant, and the affair was referred to the law; the ground where the bundle had been buried was opened, and a dead body found, which the unhappy father discovered to be that of his youngest daughter: the other was found confined in the convent, and almost dead. She revealed a scene of such abominable wickedness, as makes human nature shudder, and to which, she, like her sister, was about to fall a victim. The pretended faint, being seized, acted her part with firmness; and a prosecution was commenced against the priests and the patriarch. The enemies of the latter united to effect his ruin, in order to share his spoils, and he was suspended, and deposed. The affair was removed to Rome in 1776, and the society *de Propaganda*, on examination, discovered the most infamous scenes of debauchery, and the most horrible cruelties. It was proved that Hendia procured the death of the nuns, sometimes to get possession of their property, and at others, because they would not comply with her desires: that this infamous woman not only communicated, but even consecrated the host, and said mass: that she had holes under her

her bed, by which perfumes were introduced at the moment she pretended to be in extacy, and under the influence of the Holy Ghost; that she had a faction who cried her up, and published that she was the mother of God, returned upon earth, and a thousand other extravagancies. Notwithstanding this, she retained a party powerful enough to prevent the severe punishment she merited. She has been shut up in different convents, from whence she has frequently escaped. In 1783, she was present at the visitation of Antoura, and the brother of the Emir of the Druzes was desirous to give her her liberty. Numbers still believe in her sanctity; and, but for the accident of the traveller, her present enemies would not have doubted it. What must we think of reputations for piety, when they may depend on such trifling circumstances!

In the small country of the Maronites there are reckoned upwards of two hundred convents for men and women. These Religious are of the order of St. Anthony, whose rules they observe with an exactness which reminds us of earlier times. The dress of the monks is made of brown coarse woollen stuff,
and

and resembles that of the capuchin friars in Europe. Their food is the same as that of the peasants, with this exception, that they never eat flesh. They observe frequent fasts, and make long prayers at stated hours in the night, as well as the day; the remainder of their time is employed in cultivating the earth, or breaking the rocks to form the walls of the terraces which support their vineyards and mulberry plantations. Each convent has a brother shoemaker, a brother taylor, a brother, weaver, a brother baker; in a word, an artist of every necessary trade. We almost always find a convent of women close to one of men; yet it is rare to hear of any scandalous report. These women themselves lead a very laborious life, and it is this activity, doubtless, which secures them against all the mischiefs attendant on idleness. So far, therefore, from being injurious to population, we may affirm that these convents have contributed to promote it, by increasing by culture every article in a proportion greater than its consumption. The most remarkable of the houses of the Maronite Monks is Koz-haia, six hours journey to the east of Tripoli. There they exorcise, as in the first ages of the church, those who are
still

possessed with devils; for such persons are still to be found in these countries. A very few years ago, our merchants at Tripoli saw one of them who put the patience and learning of the monks to the proof: This man, to outward appearance healthy, was subject to sudden convulsions, which threw him into a kind of madness, sometimes sullen, at others violent. He tore, he bit, he foamed at the mouth; his usual expression was,---*The sun is my mother, let me adore her.* The priests almost drowned him with ablutions, tormented him with fasting and prayer, and, at length, as they reported, drove out the devil; but, from the account given me by more intelligent observers, it appears that those possessed are no other than persons afflicted with idiocy, madness, and epilepsies; and it is worth remarking, that *possession* and *epilepsy* are denoted by the same Arabic word (*h*).

The Court of Rome, in affiliating the Maronites, has granted them an Hospitium, at Rome, to which they may send several of their youth, to receive a gratuitous education. It should seem that this institution might introduce among them the ideas and arts of Eu-

(*h*) *Kabal* and *Kabat*. The *K* here is the Spanish *jota*.

rope;

rope; but the pupils of this school, limited to an education purely monastic, bring home nothing but the Italian language, which is of no use, and a stock of theological learning, from which as little advantage can be derived; they accordingly soon assimilate with the rest. Nor has a greater change been operated by the three or four missionaries maintained by the French capuchins at Gazir, Tripoli, and Bairout. Their labours consist in preaching in their church, in instructing children in the catechism, Thomas a Kempis, and the Psalms, and in teaching them to read and write. Formerly the Jesuits had two missionaries at their house at Antoura, and the Lazarites have now succeeded them in their mission. The most valuable advantage that has resulted from these apostolical labours is, that the art of writing has become more common among the Maronites, and rendered them, in this country, what the Copts are in Egypt, I mean, they are in possession of all the posts of writers, intendants, and kiayas among the Turks, and especially of those among their allies and neighbours, the Druzes.

S E C T. III.

Of the Druzes.

THE Druzes, or Derouz, who engaged the attention of Europe about the end of the sixteenth century, are an inconsiderable people, who, in their mode of life, form of government, language, and customs, bear a striking resemblance to the Maronites. Religion constitutes the principal difference between them. That of the Druzes was long a problem; but the mystery is at length unveiled, and it is now not difficult to give a tolerably accurate account of it, as well as of their origin, with which it is connected. To gain a proper idea of their history, it will be necessary to trace facts up to their first sources.

Twenty-three years after the death of Mahomet, the disputes between Ali, his son-in-law, and Moawia, Governor of Syria, occasioned the first schism in the empire of the Arabs, and the two sects subsist to this day; but, in reality, this difference related only to power; and the Mahometans, however divided in opinion respecting the rightful successor of

the prophet, were agreed with respect to their dogmas (*i*). It was not until the following century that the perusal of Greek books in-

(*i*) The radical cause of this great difference was the aversion conceived against Ali, by Ayesha, wife of Mahomet, because, as it is said, he had discovered her infidelity to the Prophet. She never could pardon him this indiscretion, and, after getting him three times excluded from the Califat, finding that, by his intrigues he was likely to succeed in the fourth attempt, she resolved to destroy him by open violence. For this purpose she excited against him several Arab chiefs, and among others, Amrou, Governor of Egypt, and Moawia, Governor of Syria. The latter procured himself to be proclaimed *Caliph*, or *Successor*, in the city of Damascus. Ali, in order to dispossess him, declared war; but the impropriety of his conduct ruined his affairs. After some hostilities, in which the advantages were equal on both sides, he perished at Koufa, by the hand of an Assassín or Eatenian. His partizans elected his son Hosain in his place; but this young man, ill adapted to such difficult circumstances, was slain in a rencounter by the partisans of Moawi. His death rendered the two factions still more irreconcilable. Their hatred prevented their agreeing in the exposition of the Koran. The doctors of the respective parties took a pleasure in contradicting each other; and hence arose the division of the Mahometans into two sects, who consider each other as heretics. The Turks follow that of Omar and Moawia, whom they hold to be the legitimate successors of the Prophet: the Persians are followers of Ali.

roduced

roduced among the Arabs a spirit of discussion and controversy, to which, till then, they were utter strangers. The consequence was, as might be expected, by reasoning on matters not susceptible of demonstration, and guided by the abstract principles of an unintelligible logick, they divided into a multitude of sects and opinions. At this period, too, the civil power lost its authority, and religion, which from that derives the means of preserving its unity, shared the same fate, and the Mahometans now experienced what had before fallen the Christians. The nations which had received the religion of Mahomet, mixed with it their former absurd notions; and the errors which had anciently prevailed over Asia, again made their appearance, though altered in their forms. The Metempsychosis, the doctrine of a good and evil principle, and the renovation after six thousand years, as it had been taught by Zoroaster, were again revived among the Mahometans. In this political and religious confusion, every enthusiast became an apostle, and every apostle the head of a sect. No less than sixty of these were reckoned, remarkable for the numbers of their followers, all differing in some points of faith,

and all disavowing heresy and error. Such was the state of these countries, when at the commencement of the eleventh century, Egypt became the theatre of one of the most extravagant scenes of enthusiasm and absurdity ever recorded in history. The following account is extracted from the Eastern writers.

In the year of the Hejira, 386 (A. D. 996) the third Caliph, of the race of the Fatimites, called Hakem-b'amr-ellah, succeeded to the throne of Egypt, at the age of eleven years. He was one of the most extraordinary princes of whom history has preserved the memory. He caused the first Caliphs, the companions of Mahomet, to be cursed in the mosques, and afterwards revoked the anathema: He compelled the Jews and Christians to abjure their religion, and then permitted them to resume it. He prohibited the making slippers for women, to prevent them from coming out of their houses. He burnt one half of the city of Cairo for his diversion, while his soldiers pillaged the other. Not contented with these extravagant actions, he forbade the pilgrimage to Mecca, fasting, and the five prayers; and at length carried his madness so far as to desire to pass for God himself. He ordered a
register

register of those who acknowledged him to be so, and the number amounted to sixteen thousand. This impious pretension was supported by a false prophet, who came from Persia into Egypt; which impostor, named Mohammed-ben-Ismael, taught that it was not necessary to fast or pray, to practise circumcision, to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, or observe festivals; that the prohibition of pork and wine was absurd; and that marriage between brothers and sisters, fathers and children was lawful. To ingratiate himself with Hakem, he maintained that this Caliph was God himself incarnate; and, instead of his name *Hakem-b'amr-ellah*, which signifies, governing by the order of God, he called him *Hakem-b'amr-eh*, governing by his own order. Unluckily for the prophet, his new god had not the power to protect him from the fury of his enemies, who slew him in a tumult, almost in the arms of the Caliph, who was himself massacred soon after on Mount Mokattam, where he, as he said, had held conversation with angels (*k*).

(*k*) Vide El-Makin, Hist. Saracen. Lib. I.

The death of these two chiefs did not prevent the progress of their opinions: A disciple of Mohammad-ben-Ismael, named Hamza-ben-Ahmud, propagated them with an indefatigable zeal in Egypt, in Palestine, and along the coast of Syria, as far as Sidon and Berytus. His proselytes, it seems, underwent the same fate as the Maronites; for, being persecuted by the sect in power, they took refuge in the mountains of Lebanon, where they were better able to defend themselves; at least it is certain, that, shortly after this era, we find them established there, and forming an independent society, like their neighbours.

The difference of their opinions disposes them to be enemies, but the urgent interest of their common safety forces them to allow mutual toleration, and they have always appeared united, and have jointly opposed, at different times, the Crusaders, the Sultans of Aleppo, the Mamlouks, and the Ottomans. The conquest of Syria by the latter, made no change in their situation. Selim I. on his return from Egypt, meditating no less than the conquest of Europe, disdained to waste his time before the rocks of Lebanon.

Soliman

Soliman II. his successor, incessantly engaged in important wars, either with the Knights of Rhodes, the Persians, the kingdom of Yemen, the Hungarians, the Germans, or the Emperor Charles V. had no time to think of the Druzes. Emboldened by this inattention, and not content with their independence, they frequently descended from their mountains to pillage the Turks. The Pachas in vain attempted to repel their inroads; their troops were invariably routed or repulsed; and it was not till the year 1588 that Amurath III. wearied with the complaints made to him, resolved, at all events, to reduce these rebels, and had the good fortune to succeed. His general, Ibrahim Pacha, marched from Cairo, and attacked the Druzes and Maronites with so much address and vigour as to force them into their strong holds, the mountains. Dissention took place among their chiefs, of which he availed himself to exact a contribution of upwards of one million of piasters, and to impose a tribute which has continued to the present time.

It appears that this expedition was the epocha of a considerable change in the constitution of the Druzes. Till then they had

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lived in a sort of anarchy, under the command of different Shaiks, or Lords. The nation was likewise divided into two factions, such as is to be found in all the Arab tribes, and which are distinguished into the party *Kaifi*, and the party *Yamani*. (1) To simplify the administration, Ibrahim permitted them only one Chief, who should be responsible for the tribute, and execute the office of civil magistrate; and this governor, from the nature of his situation, acquiring great authority, became almost the king of the republic; but as he was always chosen from among the Druzes, a consequence followed which the Turks had not foreseen, and which was nearly fatal to their power. For the chief thus chosen, having at his disposal the whole strength of the nation, was able to give it unanimity and force, and it naturally turned against the Turks; since the Druzes, by becoming their subjects, had not ceased to be their enemies. They took care, however, that their attacks should be indirect, so as to save appearances, and only engaged in secret hostili-

(1) These factions distinguish themselves by the colour of their flags; that of the Kaifis is red, that of the Yaminiis white.

ties,

ties, more dangerous, perhaps, than open war.

About this time, that is the beginning of the seventeenth century, the power of the Druzes attained its greatest height; which it owed to the talents and ambition of the celebrated Emir Fakr-el-din, commonly called Fakardin. No sooner was this prince advanced to be Chief of that people than he turned his whole attention to humble the Ottoman power, and aggrandize himself at its expence; in this enterprize he displayed an address seldom seen among the Turks. He first gained the confidence of the Porte, by every demonstration of loyalty and fidelity; and as the Arabs, at that time, infested the plain of Balbec, and the countries of Sour and Acre, he made war upon them, freed the inhabitants from their depredations, and thus rendered them desirous of living under his government.

The city of Bairout was situated advantageously for his designs, as it opened a communication with foreign countries, and, among others, with the Venetians, the natural enemies of the Turks. Fakr-el-din availed himself of the misconduct of the Aga, expelled
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led him, seized on the city, and even had the art to make a merit of this act of hostility with the Divan, by paying a more considerable tribute. He proceeded in the same manner at Saide, Balbec, and Sour, and, at length, about the year 1613, saw himself master of all the country, as far as Adjaloun and Safad. The Pachas of Tripoli and Damascus could not see these encroachments with indifference; sometimes they opposed him with open force, though ineffectually, and sometimes endeavoured to ruin him at the Porte, by secret insinuations; but the Emir, who maintained there his spies and defenders, defeated every attempt.

At length, however, the Divan began to be alarmed at the progress of the Druzes, and made preparations for an expedition capable of crushing them. Whether from policy or fear, Fakr-el-din did not think proper to wait this storm. He had formed connections in Italy, on which he built great hopes, and determined to go in person to solicit the succours they had promised him; persuaded that his presence would encrease the zeal of his friends, while his absence might appease the resentment of his enemies. He therefore embarked

barked at Bairout, and, after resigning the administration to his son Ali, repaired to the court of the Medici, at Florence. The arrival of an Oriental prince in Italy, did not fail to attract the public attention. Enquiry was made into his nation, and the origin of the Druzes became popular topics of research. Their history and religion were found to be so little known, as to leave it a matter of doubt whether they should be classed with the Mahometans or Christians. The Crusades were called to mind, and it was soon suggested that a people who had taken refuge in the mountains, and were enemies to the natives, could be no other than the offspring of the Crusaders.

This idle conceit was too favourable to Fakr-el-din for him to endeavour to disprove it: he was artful enough, on the contrary, to pretend he was related to the house of Lorraine; and the missionaries and merchants, who promised themselves a new opening for conversions and commerce, encouraged his pretensions. When an opinion is in vogue, every one discovers new proofs of its certainty. The learned in etymology, struck with the resemblance of the names, insisted,

insisted, that *Druzes* and *Dreux* must be the same word, and, on this foundation, formed the system of a pretended colony of French Crusaders, who under the conduct of a Comte *de Dreux*, had formed a settlement in Lebanon. This hypothesis, however, has been completely overthrown, by the remark that the name of the Druzes is to be found in the Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela, who travelled before the time of the Crusades. Indeed the futility of it ought to have been sufficiently apparent, at first, from the single consideration, that had they been descended from any nation of the Franks, they must have retained, at least, the traces of some European language; for a people, retired into a separate district, and living distinct from the natives of the country, do not lose their language. That of the Druzes, however, is very pure Arabic, without a single word of European origin. The real derivation of the name of these people has been long in our possession, without our knowing it. It originates from the founder of the sect of Mohammad-ben-Ismael, who was surnamed El-Dorzi, and not *El-Darari*, as it is usually printed: the confusion of these two words, so unlike in our writing,

writing, arises from the figure of the two Arabic letters *r* and *z*, which have only this difference, that the *z* has a point over it, frequently omitted, or effaced in the manuscripts (*m*).

After a stay of nine years in Italy, Fakr-el-din returned to resume the government of his country. During his absence, his son Ali had repulsed the Turks, appeased discontents, and maintained affairs in tolerable good order. Nothing remained for the Emir, but to employ the knowledge he could not but have acquired, in perfecting the internal administration of government, and promoting the welfare of the nation; but instead of the useful and valuable arts, he wholly abandoned himself to the frivolous and expensive, for which he had imbibed a passion while in Italy. He built numerous villas; constructed baths, and planted gar-

(*m*) This discovery is due to M. Mitchel, Dragoman, *Barataire* † of France, at Saïde, of which place he was a native: he has written a memoir on the Druzes, of which he gave one of the two copies he had to the Chevalier de Taulès, Consul at Saïde, and the other to Baron de Tott when he was there, in 1777, to inspect that factory.

† *Barataire*, is a subject of the Turkish government, privileged by one of the European Ministers, in amity with the Porte, and by that means placed upon a footing with the Franks, with respect to the payment of duties, &c. Each Minister possesses a certain number of these *Barats* at his disposal, which he cannot exceed. T.

dens

dens; he even presumed, without respect to the prejudices of his country, to employ the ornaments of painting and sculpture, notwithstanding these are prohibited by the Koran.

The consequences of this conduct soon manifested themselves: the Druzes, who paid the same tribute as in time of war, became dissatisfied. The Yamini faction were roused; the people murmured at the expences of the prince; and the luxury he displayed renewed the jealousy of the Pachas. They attempted to levy greater tribute: hostilities again commenced, and Fakr-el-din repulsed the forces of the Pachas, who took occasion, from this resistance, to render him suspected by the Sultan himself. Amurath III. incensed that one of his subjects should dare to enter into a competition with him, resolved on his destruction; and the Pacha of Damascus received orders to march, with all his forces, against Bairout, the usual residence of Fakr-el-din; while forty galleys invested, and entirely blocked it up, by sea.

The Emir, who depended on his good fortune, and succours from Italy, determined at first to brave the storm. His son, Ali, who
com-

commanded at Safad, was ordered to oppose the progress of the Turkish army, and in fact he bravely resisted them, notwithstanding the great disparity of his forces; but after having repulsed the enemy in two engagements, being slain in a third, the face of affairs were greatly changed, and every thing went to ruin. Fakr-el-din, terrified at the loss of his troops, afflicted at the death of his son, and enfeebled by age and a voluptuous life, lost both courage and presence of mind. He no longer saw any resource but in a peace, which he sent his second son to solicit of the Turkish Admiral, whom he attempted to seduce by presents; but the Admiral, detaining both the presents and the Envoy, declared he would have the prince himself. Fakr-el-din, intimidated, took to flight, and was pursued by the Turks, now masters of the country. He took refuge on the steep eminence of Niha, where they besieged him ineffectually for a whole year, when they left him at liberty: but, shortly after, the companions of his adversity, wearied with their sufferings, betrayed and delivered him up to the Turks. Fakr-el-din, though in the hands of his enemies, conceived hopes of pardon, and suffered himself

to be carried to Constantinople, where Amurath, pleased to behold at his feet a prince so celebrated, at first treated him with that benevolence which arises from the pride of superiority; but soon returning to his former jealousies, yielded to the instigations of his courtiers, and, in one of his violent fits of passion, ordered him to be strangled, about the year 1631.

After the death of Fakr-el-din, the posterity of that prince still continued in possession of the Government, though at the pleasure, and as vassals, of the Turks. This family failing in the male-line, at the beginning of the present century, the authority devolved, by the election of the Shaiks, on the house of Shehab, in which it still continues. The only Emir of that house, whose name deserves to be preserved, is the Emir Melhem, who reigned from 1740 to 1759; in which interval he retrieved the losses of the Druzes, and restored them to that consequence which they had lost by the defeat of Fakr-el din. Towards the end of his life, about the year 1754, Melhem, wearied with the cares of Government, abdicated his authority, to live in religious retirement, after the manner of

the Okkals; but the troubles that succeeded occasioned him once more to resume the reins of government, which he held till 1759, when he died, universally regretted.

He left three sons, minors: the eldest of whom ought, according to the custom of the country, to have succeeded him; but being only eleven years of age, the authority devolved on his uncle, Mansour, agreeable to a law very general in Asia, which wills the people to be governed by a sovereign who has arrived at years of maturity. The young prince was but little fitted to maintain his pretensions; but a Maronite, named Sad-el-Kouri, to whom Melhem had entrusted his education, took this upon himself. Aspiring to see his pupil a powerful prince, that he might himself become a powerful visir, he made every exertion to advance his fortune. He first retired with him to Djebail, in the Kefraouan, where the Emir Yousef possessed large domains, and there undertook to conciliate the Maronites, by embracing every opportunity to serve both individuals and the nation. The great revenues of his pupil, and the moderation of his expenditure, amply furnished him with the means. The farm of

the Kefraouan was divided between several Shaiks, with whom the Porte was not very well satisfied. Sad treated for the whole with the Pacha of Tripoli, and got himself appointed sole Receiver. The Motoualis of the valley of Balbec had, for some years before, made several encroachments on Lebanon, and the Maronites began to be alarmed at the near approach of these intolerant Mahometans. Sad purchased of the Pacha of Damascus a permission to make war upon them, and, in 1763, drove them out of the country. The Druzes were at that time divided into two factions (*n*): Sad united his interest with those who opposed Mansour, and secretly prepared the plot which was to raise the nephew on the ruin of the uncle.

At this period, the Arab Daher, who had made himself master of Galilee, and fixed his residence at Acre, disquieted the Porte by his progress and pretensions: To oppose him, the Divan had just united the Pachalics of Damascus, Saide, and Tripoli, in the hands of

(*n*) The party *Kaifi*, and the party *Yamani*. The names borne at this day by the two families which are at the head of the *Djambela*, and of the *Lesbecks*.

Osman

Osman and his children; and it was evident, that an open war was not very remote. Mansour, who dreaded the Turks too much to resist them, made use of the policy usual on such occasions, pretending a zeal for their service, while he secretly favoured their enemy. This was a sufficient motive for Sad to pursue measures directly opposite. He supported the Turks against the faction of Mansour, and manœuvred with so much good fortune or address as to depose that Emir, in 1770, and place Yousef in his Government.

In the following year, Ali Bey declared war, and attacked Damascus. Yousef, called on by the Turks, took part in the quarrel, but without being able to draw the Druzes from their mountains, to enter into the army of the Ottomans. Besides their natural repugnance, at all times, to make war out of their country, they were, on this occasion, too much divided at home to quit their habitations, and they had reason to congratulate themselves on the event. The battle of Damascus ensued, and the Turks, as we have already seen, were compleatly routed. The Pacha of Saide, escaping from this defeat,

and not thinking himself in safety in that town, sought an asylum even in the house of the Emir Yousef. The moment was unfavourable, but the face of affairs soon changed, by the flight of Mohammad Bey. The Emir, concluding that Ali Bey was dead, and not imagining that Daher was powerful enough singly to maintain the quarrel, declared openly against him. Saide was threatened with a siege, and he detached fifteen hundred men of his faction to its defence; while himself, in person, prevailing on the Druzes and Maronites to follow him, made an incursion, with twenty-five thousand peasants, into the valley of Bekaa, and, in the absence of the Motoualis, who had joined the army of Daher, laid the whole country waste, with fire and sword, from Balbec to Tyre.

While the Druzes, proud of this exploit, were marching in disorder towards the latter city, five hundred Motoualis, informed of what had happened, flew from Acre, enflamed with rage and despair, and fell with such impetuosity on their army, as to give them a complete overthrow. Such was the surprise and confusion of the Druzes, that, imagining themselves attacked by Daher himself, and betrayed

betrayed by their companions, they turned their swords on each other as they fled. The steep declivities of Djezin, and the pine-woods which were in the route of the fugitives, were strewed with dead, but few of whom perished by the hands of the Motoualis.

The Emir Youfef, ashamed of this defeat, escaped to Dair-el-Kamar, and, shortly after, attempted to take revenge; but, being again defeated in the plain between Saide and Sour, (Tyre), he was constrained to resign, to his uncle Mansour, the ring, which, among the Druzes, is the symbol of authority. In 1773, he was restored by a new revolution; but he could not support his power but at the expence of a civil war. In order, therefore, to prevent Bairout falling into the hands of the adverse faction, he requested the assistance of the Turks, and demanded, of the Pacha of Damascus, a man of sufficient abilities to defend that city. The choice fell on an adventurer, who, from his subsequent fortune, and the part he is now acting, merits to be made known.

This man, named Ahmad, is a native of Bosnia, and speaks the Sclavonian as his mo-

ther tongue, as the Ragusan captains, with whom he converses in preference to those of every other nation, assert. It is said, that flying from his country, at the age of sixteen, to escape the consequences of an attempt to violate his sister-in-law, he repaired to Constantinople, where, destitute of the means of procuring a subsistence, he sold himself to the slave-merchants, to be conveyed to Egypt; and, on his arrival at Cairo, was purchased by Ali Bey, who placed him among his Mam-louks.

Ahmad was not long in distinguishing himself by his courage and address. His patron employed him on several occasions, in dangerous coups de main, such as the assassination of such Beys and Cachefs as he suspected; of which commissions he acquitted himself so well as to acquire the name of *Djezzar*, which signifies *Cut-throat (a)*. With this claim to his friendship, he enjoyed the favour of Ali, until it was disturbed by an accident.

(o) This Djezzar is the monster so well described by Baron de Tott, in Part IV. of his Memoirs. The Baron translates the word Djezzar, Butcher.---He was in the beginning of 1787 in open revolt against the Porte.

T.

This

This jealous Bey, having proscribed one of his benefactors, called Saleh Bey, commanded Djezzar to cut off his head. Either from humanity or some secret friendship for the devoted victim, Djezzar hesitated, and even remonstrated against the order. But, learning the next day that Mahommed Bey had executed the commission, and that Ali had spoken of him not very favourably, he thought himself a lost man, and, to avoid the fate of Saleh Bey, escaped unobserved, and reached Constantinople. He there solicited employments suitable to his former rank, but meeting, as is usual in capitals, with a great number of rivals, he pursued another plan, and went to seek his fortune in Syria, as a private foldier. Chance conducted him among the Druzes, where he was hospitably entertained, even in the house of the Kiaya of the Emir Yousef. From thence he repaired to Damascus, where he soon obtained the title of Aga, with a command of five *pair of colours*, that is to say, of fifty men; and he was thus situated when fortune destined him to the Government of Bairout.

Djezzar was no sooner established there, than he took possession of it for the Turks.

Yousef was confounded at this proceeding. He demanded justice at Damascus; but finding his complaints treated with contempt, entered into a treaty with Daher, and concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with him, at Ras-el-aen, near to Sour. No sooner was Daher united with the Druzes than he laid siege to Bairout, by land, whilst two Russian frigates, whose service was purchased by six hundred purses, cannonaded it by sea. Djezzar was compelled to submit to force, and, after a vigorous resistance, gave up the city, and surrendered himself prisoner. Shaik Daher, charmed with his courage, and flattered with the preference he had given him in the surrender, conducted him to Acre, and shewed him every mark of kindness. He even ventured to trust him with a small expedition into Palestine; but Djezzar, on approaching Jerusalem, went over to the Turks, and returned to Damascus.

The war of Mohammad Bey breaking out, Djezzar offered his service to the Captain Pacha, and gained his confidence. He accompanied him to the siege of Acre, and that admiral, having destroyed Daher, and finding no person more proper than Djezzar
to

to accomplish the designs of the Porte in that country, named him Pacha of Saïde.

Being now, in consequence of this revolution, superior Lord to the Emir Yousef, Djeddar is mindful of injuries in proportion as he has reason to accuse himself of ingratitude. By a conduct truly Turkish, feigning alternately gratitude and resentment, he is alternately on terms of dispute and reconciliation with him, continually exacting money as the price of peace, or as indemnity for war. His artifices have succeeded so well that, within the space of five years, he has extorted from the Emir four millions of French money, (above a hundred and sixty thousand pounds), a sum the more astonishing as the farm of the country of the Druzes did not then amount to one hundred thousand livres, (four thousands pounds.)

In 1784, he made war on him, deposed him, and bestowed the government on the Emir of the country of Hasbeya, named Ismael. Yousef, having once more purchased his favor, returned, towards the end of the same year, to Dair-el-Kamar, and even courted his confidence so far as to wait on him at Acre, from whence nobody expected him to return, but
Djeddar

Djezzar is too cunning to shed blood while there are any hopes of getting money: he released the prince, and sent him back with every mark of friendship. Since that period, the Porte has named him Pacha of Damascus, where he now resides. There, still retaining the Sovereignty of the Pachalic of Acre, and of the country of the Druzes, he has seized on Sad, the Kiaya of the Emir, and, under pretext of his being the author of the troubles, has threatened to strike off his head. The Maronites, alarmed for the safety of this man, whom they revere, have offered nine hundred purses for his ransom. The Pacha demands a thousand; and if, as will probably be the case, their money be exhausted by these repeated contributions, woe to the prince and his minister! on their fate depends that of many others; and, indeed, they may be said to have deserved it, for it was the incapacity of the one, and the ambition of the other, which, by inviting the Turks to interfere in the affairs of the Druzes, has given so fatal a blow to the safety and tranquillity of the nation; that, in the ordinary course of things, it will be long before it can possibly

possibly recover its former prosperity and power.

Let us return to the religion of the Druzes. What has been already said of the opinions of Mahommed-ben-Ismael may be regarded as the substance of it. They practise neither circumcision, nor prayers, nor fasting; they observe neither festivals, nor prohibitions. They drink wine, eat pork, and allow marriage between brothers and sisters, though not between fathers and children. From this we may conclude, with reason, that the Druzes have no religion: yet, one class of them must be excepted, whose religious customs are very peculiar. Those who compose it are to the rest of the nation what the *initiated* were to the *profane*; they assume the name of *Okkals*, which means spiritualists, and bestow on the vulgar the epithet of *Djabel*, or ignorant; they have various degrees of initiation, the highest orders of which require celibacy. These are distinguishable by the White Turban they affect to wear as a symbol of their purity; and so proud are they of this supposed purity, that they think themselves sullied by even touching a profane person. If you eat out
of

of their plate, or drink out of their cup, they break them; and hence the custom, so general in this country, of using vases, with a sort of cock, which may be drank out of without touching them with the lips. All their practices are enveloped in mysteries: their Oratories always stand alone, and are constantly situated on eminences: in these they hold their secret assemblies, to which women are admitted. It is pretended they perform ceremonies there in presence of a small statue resembling an ox or a calf; whence some have pretended to prove that they are descended from the Samaritans. But, besides that the fact is not well ascertained, the worship of the ox may be deduced from other sources.

They have one or two books which they conceal with the greatest care; but chance has deceived their jealousy; for, in a civil war, which happened six or seven years ago, the Emir Yousef, who is *Djabel*, or ignorant, found one among the pillage of one of their oratories. I am assured, by persons who have read it, that it contains only a mystic jargon, the obscurity of which, doubtless, renders it valuable to adepts. Hakem Bamrellah is there spoken of, by whom they mean

mean God, incarnated in the person of the Caliph. It likewise treats of another life, of a place of punishment, and a place of happiness, where the Okkals shall, of course, be most distinguished. Several degrees of perfection are mentioned, to which they arrive by successive trials. In other respects, these sectaries have all the insolence, and all the fears, of superstition: they are not communicative, because they are weak; but it is probable that, were they powerful, they would be promulgators and intolerant.

The rest of the Druzes, strangers to this spirit, are wholly indifferent about religious matters. The Christians, who live in their country, pretend that several of them believe in the Metempsychosis; that others worship the sun, moon, and stars, all which is possible; for, as among the Ansarians, every one, left to his own choice, follows the opinion that pleases him most; and these opinions are those which present themselves most naturally to unenlightened minds. When among the Turks, they affect the exterior of Mahometans, frequent the Mosques, and perform their ablutions and prayers. Among the Maronites, they accompany them to church,

church, and, like them, make use of holy water. Many of them, importuned by the missionaries, suffer themselves to be baptized, and, if solicited by the Turks, receive circumcision, and conclude by dying neither Christians nor Mahometans; but they are not so indifferent in matters of civil policy (*p*).

(*p*) The above account of the *Druzes* corresponds exactly with the *Historical Memoir* on that people, translated from the manuscript of M. *Venture de Paradis*, which contains *extracts* from their *sacred books*, a *catechism*, &c. The Memoir in question, confirms the accuracy of our Author, who had never seen it, nor was acquainted with M. Venture. The latter gentleman and M. Suguste, a most amiable man, and a well informed traveller in the east, who have just done the translator the honour of a visit, concur in bestowing the highest commendations on the present work, and do not hesitate to pronounce it the most accurate modern book that has appeared respecting Syria and Egypt. To their eulogium may be added the distinguished approbation of M. de St. Priest, the late Ambassador of the Court of France and Constantinople, which he has expressed in the strongest terms. T.

S E C T.

S E C T. IV.

Of the government of the Druzes.

THE Druzes, as well as the Maronites, may be divided into two classes, the common people, and the people of eminence and property, distinguished by the title of Shaiks, and Emirs, or descendants of Princes. The greater part are cultivators, either as Farmers or proprietors; every man lives on his inheritance, improving his mulberry-trees and vineyards; in some districts they grow tobacco, cotton, and some grain, but the quantity of these is inconsiderable. It appears that, at first, all the lands were, as formerly in Europe, in the hands of a small number of families. But, to render them productive, the great proprietors were forced to sell part of them, and let leases, which subdivision is become the chief source of the power of the state by multiplying the number of persons interested in the public weal: there still exists, however, some traces of the original inequality, which even at this day produces pernicious effects. The great property possessed by some families,

gives them too much influence in all the measures of the nation; and their private interests have too great weight in every public transaction. Their history, for some years back, affords sufficient proofs of this; since all the civil or foreign wars in which they have been engaged have originated in the ambition and personal views of some of the principal families, such as the Lesbeks, the Djambelats, the Ismaels of Solyma, &c. The Shaiks of these houses, who alone possess one tenth part of the country, procured creatures by their money, and, at last, involved all the Druzes in their dissensions. It must be owned, however, that, possibly, to this conflict between contending parties the whole nation owes the good fortune of never having been enslaved by its chief.

This chief, called *Hakem*, or governor, also Emir, or Prince, is a sort of king, or general, who unites in his own person the civil and military powers. His authority is sometimes transmitted from father to son, sometimes from one brother to another, and the succession is determined rather by force than any certain laws. Females can in no case pretend to succeed to this dignity. They are already

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excluded

excluded from succession in civil affairs, and, consequently, can still less expect it in political. In general, the Asiatic governments are too turbulent, and their administration renders military talents too necessary to admit of the sovereignty of women. Among the Druzes, the male line of any family being extinguished, the government devolves to him who is in possession of the greatest number of suffrages and resources. But the first step is to obtain the approbation of the Turks, of whom he becomes the vassal and tributary. It even happens, that, not unfrequently to assert their supremacy, they name the Hakem, contrary to the wishes of the nation, as in the case of Ismael Hasbeya, raised to that dignity by Djezzar; but this constraint lasts no longer than it is maintained by that violence which gave it birth. The office of the governor is to watch over the good order of the state, and to prevent the Emirs, Shaiks, and villages, from making war on each other; in case of disobedience, he may employ force. He is also at the head of the civil power, and names the Cadis, only, always reserving to himself the power of life and death. He collects the tribute, from which, he annually

pays to the Pacha a stated sum. This tribute varies, in proportion as the nation renders itself more or less formidable. At the beginning of this century, it amounted to one hundred and sixty purses, (eight thousand three hundred and thirty pounds), but Melhem forced the Turks to reduce it to sixty. In 1784, Emir Yousef paid eighty and promised ninety. This tribute, which is called *Miri*, is imposed on the mulberry-trees, vineyards, cotton, and grain. All sown land, pays in proportion to its extent; every foot of mulberries is taxed at three Medins, or three Sols, nine Deniers, (not quite two-pence). A hundred feet of vineyard, pays a Piafter, or forty Medins, and fresh measurements are often made, to preserve a just proportion. The Shaiks and Emirs have no exemption in this respect, and it may be truly said, they contribute to the public stock in proportion to their fortune. The collection is made almost without expence. Each man pays his contingent at Dair-el-Kamar, if he pleases, or to the collectors of the prince, who make a circuit round the country, after the crop of silks. The surplus of this tribute is for the prince, so that it is his interest to reduce the demands

demands of the Turks, as it would be likewise to augment the impost; but this measure requires the sanction of the Shaiks, who have the privilege of opposing it. Their consent is necessary, likewise, for peace and war. In these cases, the Emir must convoke general assemblies, and lay before them the state of his affairs. There, every Shaik, and every Peasant, who has any reputation for courage or understanding, is entitled to give his suffrage; so that this government may be considered as a well-proportioned mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. Every thing depends on circumstances: if the governor be a man of ability, he is absolute; if weak, a cypher. This proceeds from the want of fixed laws; a want common to all Asia, and the radical cause of all the disorders in the governments of the Asiatic nations.

Neither the chief, nor the individual Emirs, maintain troops; they have only persons attached to the domestic service of their houses, and a few black slaves. When the nation makes war, every man, whether Shaik or Peasant, able to bear arms, is called upon to march. He takes with him a little bag of

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flour,

flour, a musquet, some bullets, a small quantity of powder, made in his village, and repairs to the rendezvous appointed by the governor. If it be a civil war, as sometimes happens, the servants, the farmers, and their friends, take up arms for their patron, or the chief of their family, and repair to his standard. In such cases, the parties irritated, frequently seem on the point of proceeding to the last extremities ; but they seldom have recourse to acts of violence, or attempt the death of each other ; mediators always interpose, and the quarrel is appeased the more readily, as each patron is obliged to provide his followers with provisions and ammunition. This system, which produces happy effects in civil troubles, is attended with great inconvenience in foreign wars, as sufficiently appeared in that of 1784. Djezzar, who knew that the whole army was maintained at the expence of the Emir Yousef, aimed at nothing but delay, and the Druzes, who were not displeased at being fed for doing nothing, prolonged the operations ; but the Emir, wearied of paying, concluded a treaty, the terms of which were not a little rigorous for him, and, eventually, for the whole nation, since nothing is more certain

tain than that the interests of a prince and his subjects are always inseparable.

The ceremonies to which I have been a witness on these occasions, bear a striking resemblance to the customs of ancient times. When the Emir and the Shaiks had determined on war, at Dair-el-Kamar, cryers, in the evening, ascended the summits of the mountain; and there began to cry with a loud voice: *To war, to war; take your guns, take your pistols; noble Shaiks, mount your horses; arm yourselves with the lance and sabre; rendezvous to-morrow at Dair-el-Kamar. Zeal of God! Zeal of combats!* This summons heard in the neighbouring villages, was repeated there, and, as the whole country is nothing but a chain of lofty mountains, and deep vallies, the proclamation passed in a few hours to the frontiers. These voices, from the stillness of the night, the long resounding echoes, and the nature of the subject, had something awful and terrible in their effect. Three days after, fifteen thousand armed men rendezvouzed at Dair-el-Kamar, and operations might have been immediately commenced.

We may easily imagine that troops of this kind no way resemble our European soldiers; they have neither uniforms, nor discipline, nor order. They are a crowd of peasants with short coats, naked legs, and muskets in their hands; differing from the Turks and Mamlouks, in that they are all foot; the Shaiks and Emirs alone having horses, which are of little use from the rugged nature of the country. War there can only be a war of posts. The Druzes never risk themselves in the plain, and with reason, for they would be unable to stand the shock of cavalry, having no bayonets to their muskets. Their whole art consists in climbing rocks, and creeping among the bushes and blocks of stone, from whence their fire is the more dangerous; as they are covered, fire at their ease, and by hunting, and military sports, have acquired the habit of hitting a mark with great dexterity. They are accustomed to sudden inroads, surprises by night, ambuscades, and all those *coups de main*, which require to attack suddenly, and come to close fight with the enemy. Ardent in improving their success, easily dispirited, and prompt to resume their
courage;

courage; daring even to temerity, and sometimes ferocious, they possess above all, two qualities essential to the excellency of any troops; they strictly obey their leaders, and are endowed with a temperance and vigour of health, at this day unknown to most civilized nations. In the campaign of 1784, they passed three months in the open air, without tents, or any other covering than a sheep-skin; yet were there not more deaths or maladies than if they had remained in their houses. Their provisions consisted, as at other times, of small loaves baked on the ashes, or on a brick, raw onions, cheese, olives, fruits, and a little wine. The table of the chiefs was almost as frugal, and we may affirm, that they subsisted a hundred days, on what the same number of Englishmen or Frenchmen would not have lived ten. They have no knowledge of the science of fortification, the management of artillery, or encampments, nor, in a word, any thing which constitutes the art of war. But, had they among them a few persons versed in military science, they would readily acquire its principles, and become a formidable soldiery. This would be the more easily effected, as their mulberry plantations and

vineyards do not occupy them all the year, and they could afford much time for military exercises (*p*).

By the last estimates, it appears the number of men able to bear arms was forty thousand, which supposes a total population of a hundred and twenty thousand: no addition is to be made to this calculation, since there are no Druzes in the cities or on the coast. As the whole country contains only one hundred and ten square leagues, there results for every league, one thousand and ninety persons; which is equal to the population of our richest provinces. This will appear more remarkable, when we consider that the soil is not fertile, that a great many eminences remain uncultivated, that they do not grow corn enough to support themselves three months in the year, that they have no manufactures, and that all their exportations are confined to silks and cottons, the balance of which exceeds very little the importation of corn from the Hauran, the oils of Palestine, and the rice

(*p*) In this leisure time, when the gathering of the silk is over in Lebanon, a great number of Peasants, as is usual among those of the Limousin in France, leave the mountains to get in the harvests in the plains.

and

and coffee they procure from Bailout.— Whence arises then such a number of inhabitants, within so small a space? I can discover no other cause, than that ray of liberty which glimmers in this country. Unlike the Turks, every man lives in a perfect security of his life and property. The peasant is not richer than in other countries; but he is free, “he fears not,” as I have often heard them say, “that the Aga, the Kaimmakam, or the Pacha, should send their Djendis (*q*), to pillage his house, carry off his family, or give him the bastinado.” Such oppressions are unknown among these mountains. Security, therefore, has been the original cause of population, from that inherent desire which all men have to multiply themselves wherever they find an easy subsistence. The frugality of the nation, which is content with little, has been a secondary, and not less powerful reason; and a third, is the emigration of a number of Christian families, who daily desert the Turkish provinces to settle in Mount Lebanon, where they are received with open arms by the

(*q*) Soldiers.

Maronites,

Maronites, from similitude of religion, and by the Druzes from principles of toleration, and a conviction how much it is the interest of every country to multiply the number of its cultivators, consumers, and allies. They all live quietly together; but I cannot help adding, that the Christians frequently display an indiscreet and meddling zeal, too well calculated to disturb this tranquillity.

The comparison which the Druzes often have an opportunity of making, between their situation and that of other subjects of the Turkish Government, has given them an advantageous opinion of their superiority, which, by a natural effect, has an influence on their personal character. As they are not exposed to the violence and insults of despotism, they consider themselves as more perfect than their neighbours, because they have the good fortune not to be equally debased. Hence they acquire a character more elevated, energetic, and active; in short, a genuine republican spirit. They are considered throughout the Levant as restless, enterprising, hardy, and brave even to temerity. Only three hundred of them have been seen to enter Damascus in open day, and spread around them terror and

and carnage. It is remarkable, that though their form of Government is nearly similar, the Maronites do not possess these qualities to the same degree. Enquiring the reason, one day, in a company where this observation was made, in consequence of some recent events, an old Maronite, after a moment's silence, taking his pipe from his mouth, and curling his beard round his fingers, made answer, "Perhaps the Druzes would be more afraid of death, did they believe in a future state." Nor are they great preachers of that morality which consists in pardoning injuries. No people are more nice than they with respect to the point of honour: Any offence of that kind, or open insult, is instantly punished by blows of the kandjar or the musquet; while among the inhabitants of the towns, it only excites injurious retorts. This delicacy has occasioned, in their manners and discourse, a reserve, or, if you will, a politeness, which one is astonished to discover among peasants. It is carried even to dissimulation and falsehood, especially among the chiefs, whose greater interests demand greater attentions. Circumspection is necessary to all, from the formidable consequences of that retaliation
of

of which I have spoken. These customs may appear barbarous to us; but they have the merit of supplying the deficiency of regular justice, which is necessarily tedious and uncertain in these disorderly and almost anarchical Governments.

The Druzes have another point of honour: that of hospitality. Whoever presents himself at their door in the quality of a suppliant or passenger, is sure of being entertained with lodging and food, in the most generous and unaffected manner. I have often seen the lowest peasants give the last morsel of bread they had in their houses to the hungry traveller; and when I observed to them that they wanted prudence, their answer was, "God is liberal and great, and all men are brethren." There are, therefore, no inns in this country, any more than in the rest of Turkey. When they have once contracted with their guest, the sacred engagement of *bread and salt*, no subsequent event can make them violate it: Various instances of this are related, which do honour to their character. A few years ago, an Aga of the Janisfaries, having been engaged in a rebellion, fled from Damascus, and retired among the Druzes.

Druzes. The Pacha was informed of this, and demanded him of the Emir, threatening to make war on him in case of refusal. The Emir demanded him of the Shaik Talhouk, who had received him; but the indignant Shaik replied, "When have you known the Druzes deliver up their guests? Tell the Emir, that, as long as Talhouk shall preserve his beard, not a hair of the head of his suppliant shall fall!" The Emir threatened him with force; Talhouk armed his family. The Emir, dreading a revolt, adopted a method practised as juridical in that country. He declared to the Shaik, that he would cut down fifty mulberry-trees a day, until he should give up the Aga. He proceeded as far as a thousand, and Talhouk still remained inflexible. At length, the other Shaiks, enraged, took up the quarrel, and the commotion was about to become general, when the Aga, reproaching himself with being the cause of so much mischief, made his escape, without the knowledge even of Talhouk (r).

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(r) I have found in an Arabic manuscript, another anecdote, which, though foreign to my present subject, I think too excellent to be omitted.

"In

The Druzes have also the prejudices of the Bedouins respecting birth; like them, they pay great respect to the antiquity of families; but this produces no essential inconveniencies. The nobility of the Emirs and Shaiks does not exempt them from paying tribute, in proportion to their revenues. It confers on them no prerogatives, either in the attainment of landed property, or public employments. In this country, no more than in all Turkey, are

“ In the time of the Caliphs, says the Author, when Abdalah, the *shedder of blood*, had murdered every descendant of Ommiah, within his reach, one of that family named Ibrahim, the son of Soliman, son of Abd-el-Malek, had the good fortune to escape, and reach Koufa, which he entered in disguise. Knowing no person in whom he could confide, he sat down under the portico of a large house. Soon after, the master, arriving, followed by several servants, alighted from his horse, entered, and, seeing the stranger, asked him who he was. I am an unfortunate man, replies Ibrahim, and request from thee an asylum. God protect thee, said the rich man; enter, and remain in peace. Ibrahim lived several months in this house, without being questioned by his host. But, astonished to see him every day go out on horseback, and return, at the same hour, he ventured one day to enquire the reason—I have been informed, replied the rich man, that a person named Ibrahim, the son of Soliman, is concealed in this town; he has slain my father, and I am searching

are they acquainted with game-laws, or glebes, or seigniorial, or ecclesiastical tithes, franc fiefs or alienation fines; every thing is held, as I have said, in freehold: Every man, after paying his miri and his rent, is master of his property. In short, by a particular privilege, the Druzes and Maronites pay no fine for their succession; nor does the Emir, like the Sultan, arrogate to himself original and uni-

“ searching for him to retaliate.---Then I knew, said Ibra-
 “ him, that God had purposely conducted me to that
 “ place; I adored his decree, and, resigning myself to
 “ death, I answered,---God has determined to avenge thee,
 “ offended man; thy victim is at thy feet. The rich man,
 “ astonished, replied,---O! stranger! I see thy misfortunes
 “ have made thee weary of life; thou seekest to lose it,
 “ but my hand cannot commit such a crime.---I do not
 “ deceive thee, said Ibrahim; thy father was such a one;
 “ we met each other in such a place, and the affair hap-
 “ pened in such and such a manner. A violent trembling
 “ then seized the rich man; his teeth chattered, his eyes
 “ alternately sparkled with fury, and overflowed with
 “ tears. In this agitation, he remained a long time; at
 “ length, turning to Ibrahim---To-morrow, said he, de-
 “ stiny shall join thee to my father, and God will have re-
 “ taliated. But as for me, how can I violate the sacred
 “ laws of hospitality? Wretched stranger, fly from my
 “ presence! There, take these hundred sequins: Begone
 “ quickly, and let me never behold thee more!”

versal

versal property: there exists, nevertheless, in the law of inheritance, an imperfection which produces disagreeable effects. Fathers have, as in the Roman law, the power of preferring such of their children as they think proper; hence it has happened, in several families of the Shaiks, that the whole property has centered in the same person, who has perverted it to the purpose of intriguing and caballing, while his relations remain, as they well express it, *princes of olives and cheese*; that is to say, poor as peasants.

In consequence of their prejudices, the Druzes do not choose to make alliances out of their own families. They invariably prefer their relation, though indigent, to a rich stranger; and poor peasants have been known to refuse their daughters to merchants of Saide and Bairout, who were worth twelve or fifteen thousand piastras. They observe also, to a certain degree, the custom of the Hebrews, which directed that a brother should espouse his brother's widow; but this is not peculiar to them, for they retain that as well as several other customs of that ancient people, in common with other inhabitants of Syria, and all the Arab tribes.

In short, the proper and distinguishing character of the Druzes, is, as I have said, a sort of republican spirit, which gives them more energy than any other subjects of the Turkish government, and an indifference for religion, which forms a striking contrast with the zeal of the Mahometans and Christians. In other respects, their private life, their customs and prejudices, are the same with other Orientals. They may marry several wives, and repudiate them when they chuse; but, except by the Emir, and a few men of eminence, that is rarely practised. Occupied with their rural labours, they experience neither artificial wants, nor those inordinate passions, which are produced by the idleness of the inhabitants of cities and towns. The veil, worn by their women, is of itself a preservative against those desires which are the occasion of so many evils in society. No man knows the face of any other woman than his wife, his mother, his sister, and sister-in-law. Every one lives in the bosom of his own family, and goes little abroad. The women, those even of the Shaiks, make the bread, roast the coffee, wash the linen, cook the victuals, and perform all domestic offices. The men cultivate their

lands and vineyards, and dig canals for watering them. In the evening they sometimes assemble in the court, the area, or house of the chief of the village or family. There, seated in a circle, with legs crossed, pipes in their mouths, and poniards at their belts, they discourse of their various labours, the scarcity or plenty of their harvests, peace or war, the conduct of the Emir, or the amount of the taxes; they relate past transactions, discuss present interests, and form conjectures on the future. Their children, tired with play, come frequently to listen; and a stranger is surprised to hear them, at ten or twelve years old, recounting, with a serious air, why Djezzar declared war against the Emir Yousef, how many purses it cost that prince, what augmentation there will be of the miri, how many muskets there were in the camp, and who had the best mare. This is their only education. They are neither taught to read the Psalms, as among the Maronites, nor the Koran, like the Mahometans; hardly do the Shaiks know how to write a letter. But if their minds be destitute of useful or agreeable information, at least, they are not pre-occupied by false and hurtful ideas; and,
without

without doubt, such natural ignorance is well worth all our artificial folly. This advantage results from it, that their understandings being nearly on a level, the inequality of conditions is less perceptible. For, in fact, we do not perceive among the Druzes that great distance which, in most other societies, degrades the inferior, without contributing to the advantage of the great. All, whether Shaiks or peasants, treat each other with that rational familiarity, which is equally remote from rudeness and servility. The Grand Emir, himself, is not a different man from the rest: he is a good country gentleman, who does not disdain admitting to his table the meanest farmer. In a word, their manners are those of ancient times, and that rustic life, which marks the origin of every nation; and prove the people among whom they are still found, are, as yet, only in the infancy of the social state.

“ This would be injustice and tyranny, of
 “ which God is incapable from the perfec-
 “ tion of the divine nature.” To this doctrine,
 which diametrically opposes the system of the
 Sonnites, the Motoualis add certain ceremonies
 which increase their mutual aversion. They curse
 Omar and Moawia as rebels and usurpers; and
 celebrate Ali and Hosain as saints and martyrs.
 They begin their ablutions at the elbow, instead
 of the end of the finger, as is customary with
 the Turks; they think themselves defiled by the
 touch of strangers, and, contrary to the general
 practice of the East, neither eat nor drink out
 of a vessel which has been used by a person not
 of their sect, nor will they even sit with such
 at the same table.

These doctrines and customs, by separating
 the Motoualis from their neighbours, have rendered
 them a distinct society. It is said, they have long
 existed as a nation, in this country, though their
 name has never been mentioned by any European
 writer before the present century; it is not even to
 be found in the maps of Danville: La Roque, who
 visited their country not a hundred years ago, gives
 them the name of *Amedians*. Be this as it may,
 in later times, their wars, robberies, successes,
 and

and various changes of fortune, have rendered them of consequence in Syria. Till about the middle of this century, they only possessed Balbec, their capital, and a few places in the valley, and Anti Lebanon, which seems to have been their original country. At that period, we find them under a like government with the Druzes, that is under a number of Shaiks, with one principal chief, of the family of Harfouh. After the year 1750, they established themselves among the heights of Bekaa, and got footing in Lebanon, where they obtained lands belonging to the Maronites, almost as far as Besharrai. They even incommoded them so much by their ravages, as to oblige the Emir Yousef to attack them with open force, and expel them; but, on the other side, they advanced along the river, even to the neighbourhood of Sour, (Tyre). In this situation, Shaik Daher had the address, in 1760, to attach them to his party. The Pachas of Saide and Damascus claimed tributes, which they had neglected paying, and complained of several robberies committed on their subjects by the Motoualis; they were desirous of chastising them, but this vengeance was neither certain nor easy.

easy. Daher interposed, and, by becoming security for the tribute, and promising to prevent any depredations, acquired allies who were able, as it is said, to arm ten thousand horsemen, all resolute and formidable troops. Shortly after, they took possession of Sour, and made this village their principal sea-port. In 1771, they were of great service to Ali Bey and Daher, against the Turks. But Emir Yousef, having, in their absence, armed the Druzes, ravaged their country. He was besieging the castle of Djezin, when the Motoualis, returning from Damascus, received intelligence of this invasion. At the relation of the barbarities committed by the Druzes, an advanced corps, of only five hundred men, were so enraged, that they immediately rushed forward against the enemy, determined to perish in taking vengeance. But the surprize and confusion they occasioned, and the discord which reigned between the two factions of Mansour and Yousef, so much favoured this desperate attack, that the whole army, consisting of twenty-five thousand men, was completely overthrown.

In the following year, the affairs of Daher taking a favourable turn, the zeal of the
Motoualis

Moutoualis cooled towards him, and they finally abandoned him in the catastrophe in which he lost his life. But they have suffered for their imprudence, under the administration of the Pacha who succeeded him. Since the year 1777, Djezzar, master of Acre and Saide, has incessantly laboured to destroy them. His persecution forced them, in 1784, to a reconciliation with the Druzes, and to enter into an alliance with the Emir Yousef. Though reduced to less than seven hundred armed men, they did more in that campaign than fifteen or twenty thousand Druzes and Maronites, assembled at Dair-el-Kamar. They alone took the strong fortrefs of Mar-Djebaa, and put to the sword fifty or sixty Arnauts (*t*), who defended it. But the misunderstanding which prevailed among the chiefs of the Druzes having rendered abortive all their operations, the Pacha has obtained possession of the whole valley, and the city of Balbec itself. At this period, not more than five hundred families of the Motoualis remained, who took refuge in Anti-Lebanon, and the Lebanon of the Maronites; and, driven, as

(*t*) The name given by the Turks to the Macedonian and Epirot soldiers.

they now are, from their native soil, it is probable they will soon be totally annihilated, and even their very name become extinct.

Such are the distinct tribes we find in Syria. The remainder of the inhabitants, who are considerably the most numerous, are, as I have said, composed of Turks, Greeks, and Arabs. It now remains for me to give a sketch of the divisions of the country, under the Turkish administration, and to add a few general reflexions on its forces and revenues, its form of government, and the characters and manners of its inhabitants.

But before I proceed to these particulars, it may be proper to give some idea of the commotions, which, in our days, were on the point of producing an important revolution, and erecting an independent power in Syria; I mean the insurrection of Shaik Daher, who, for many years, attracted the attention of Politicians. A succinct narrative of his history must be the more interesting as it is new, and as the accounts we have seen in the Gazettes of Europe are ill calculated to furnish a just idea of the real state of affairs in these distant countries.

CHAP.

EGYPT AND SYRIA.

9

C H A P. XXV.

*Summary of the history of Daher, son of Omar,
who governed at Acre from 1750 to 1776.*

SHAik Daher, who, in our time, has given so much trouble to the Porte, was an Arabian by birth, descended from one of those tribes of Bedouins who usually encamp on the banks of the Jordan, and the environs of Lake Tabbaria, (the ancient Tiberias). His enemies are fond of reminding us, that, in his youth, he was a camel driver; but this circumstance, which does honour to his abilities, by suggesting the difficulties he must have encountered in his rise, has, besides, in this country, nothing incompatible with a distinguished birth: it is now, and always will be, usual with the Arab princes, to employ themselves in occupations which appear to us mean. Thus I have already observed, that the Shaiks themselves guide their camels, and look after their horses, while their wives and daughters grind the corn, bake the bread, wash the linen, and fetch water, as in the times of Abraham, and Homer; and this
simple

simple and laborious life, possibly, contributes more to happiness than that listless inactivity, and satiating luxury which surround the great in polished nations. As for Daher, it is certain that he was one of the most powerful families of the country. After the death of his father Omar, about the beginning of the present century, he divided the government with his uncle and two brothers. His domain was Safad, a small town and stronghold in the mountains, to the north-west of the Lake of Tabaria, to which he shortly after added Tabaria itself. There Pocock (*u*) found him, in 1737, occupied in fortifying himself against the Pacha of Damascus, who, not long before, had strangled one of his brothers. In 1742, another Pacha, named Soliman-el-adm, besieged him there, and bombarded the place, to the great astonishment of all Syria, where bombs are but little known, even at present (*x*). In spite of his courage, Daher was reduced to the last extremity; when a fortunate, and, as it is alledged,

(*u*) Pococke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 69.

(*x*) I have seen letters of M. Jean Joseph Blanc, a merchant of Acre, who was in Soliman's camp, at this time, in which a circumstantial account is given of this affair.

not

not a casual incident, relieved him from his embarrassment. A violent and sudden cholic carried off Soliman in two days. Asad-el-adm, his brother and successor, wanted either the same motives, or the same inclinations, to continue the war, and Daher was unmolested on the part of the Turks. But his activity, and the intrigues of his neighbours, soon gave him other employment. Reasons of interest embroiled him with his uncle and brother, recourse was had to arms more than once, and Daher, always victorious, thought it best to conclude these disputes by the death of his competitors.

Invested, then, with the whole power of his family, an absolute master of its force, new prospects opened to his ambition. The commerce in which he engaged, according to the custom of all the Asiatic princes and governors, made him sensible of the advantage of an immediate communication with the sea. He conceived that a port in his hands would become a public market, to which strangers resorting, a competition would arise favourable to the sale of his commodities. Acre, situated in his neighbourhood, and under his eye, was suited to his designs,
since

since for several years he had transacted business there with the French factors. This town was in reality but a heap of ruins, a miserable open village, without defence. The Pacha of Saide maintained there an Aga, and a few soldiers, who dared not shew themselves in the field; while the Bedouins really governed, and were masters of all the country, up to its very gates. The plain, so fertile in former times, was nothing but an extensive waste, on which the waters stagnated, and infected the environs by their vapours. The ancient harbour was choaked up, but the road of Haifa, which is dependant on it, was so advantageously situated that Daher determined to gain possession of it. A pretext was necessary, which was soon furnished by the conduct of the Aga.

One day, while some warlike stores, intended to be employed against the Shaik, were landing, Daher marched briskly towards Acre, sent a menacing letter to the Aga, which made him take to flight, and entered the town, where he established himself, without resistance: this happened about the year 1749. He was then sixty-three years old. This age seems rather too advanced for

for such enterprizes; but when we recollect, that, in 1776, at near ninety, he still boldly mounted a fiery steed, it is evident he was much younger than that age usually implies. So bold a measure could not pass unnoticed; this he foresaw, therefore instantly dispatched a letter to the Pacha of Saide, representing to him that the affair was entirely personal between him and the Aga, and protesting that he was not less the very submissive subject of the Sultan, and the Pacha; that he would pay the tribute of the district he now occupied, as had been done heretofore by the Aga; and would undertake besides to restrain the Arabs, and do every thing in his power to restore this ruined country. This application, backed by a few thousand Sequins, produced its effect in the Divans of Saide, and Constantinople: his reasons were acknowledged just, and all his demands granted.

Not that the Porte was the dupe of the protestations of Daher; it is too much accustomed to such proceedings to mistake them; but it is a maxim with the Turks, not to keep their vassals in too strict an obedience; they have long been convinced, that were they to make war with all rebels, it
would

would be an endless labour, and occasion a vast consumption of men and money; without reckoning the risk of frequent defeats, and the consequent encouragement to revolt. Their plan, therefore, is to be patient; temporize (*y*); and excite the neighbours, relations, and children of the revolters against them; and, sooner, or later, the rebels, who uniformly follow the same steps, suffer the same fate, and end by enriching the Sultan with their spoils.

Daher, on his part, well knew the real value of this apparent friendship. Acre, which he intended for his residence, was destitute of defence, and might easily be surprized, either by sea or land; he determined, therefore, to fortify it. In the year 1750, under pretext of building himself a house, he erected, on the northern point towards the sea, a palace, which he provided with cannon. He then built several towers for the defence of the harbour, and enclosed the town by a wall, in which he left only two gates.

(*y*) The Arabs, in reference to this, have a singular proverb, which admirably paints this conduct: "The Osmanli, say they, catch hares with waggons."

These

These by the Turks were imagined very formidable works, though they would be laughed at in Europe. The palace of Daher, with its lofty and slight walls, its narrow ditch, and antique turrets, is incapable of the smallest resistance: four field pieces would demolish, in two discharges, both the walls and the wretched cannon mounted on them, at the height of fifty feet. The wall of the town is still more feeble; it has neither fossé, nor rampart, and is not three feet thick. Through all this part of Asia, bastions, lines of defence, covered ways, ramparts, and, in short, every thing relative to modern fortification, are utterly unknown. A single thirty gun frigate would, without difficulty, bombard, and lay in ruins, the whole coast: but, as this ignorance is common both to the assailants and defendants, the balance remains equal.

After these precautions, Daher occupied himself in effecting such a reformation in the country as should augment his power. The Arabs of Saker, Muzaina, and other neighbouring tribes, had caused a desertion of the Peasants, by their inroads and devastations: he undertook to repel them; and by alter-

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nately

nately employing prayers and menaces, presents and arms, restored security to the husbandman, who might now sow his corn, without fear of seeing the harvest destroyed, or carried off by robbers. The excellence of the soil attracted cultivators, but the certainty of security, that blessing so precious to those who have lived in a state of continual alarm, was a still stronger inducement. The fame of Daher spread through Syria, and Mahometan and Christian farmers, every where despoiled and harrassed, took refuge, in great numbers, with a prince under whom they were sure to find both civil and religious liberty. A colony of Greeks emigrated from Cyprus, now nearly desolated, by the oppressions of the governor, the insurrections they produced, and the cruelty with which Kior Pacha expiated such offences (z). To these, Daher assigned a spot of ground, under the walls of Acre, which they laid out into gardens. The Europeans, who found a ready sale for their merchandize, formed nu-

(z) When Kior Pacha came to Cyprus, he threw a number of the revolvers, from the tops of the walls upon iron hooks, where they remained suspended, till they expired in dreadful torments.

merous

merous settlements; the lands were cleared, the waters drained, the air became purer, and the country at once salubrious and pleasant.

To strengthen himself still more, Daher renewed his alliances with the great tribes of the desert, among whom he had disposed of his children in marriage. This policy had several advantages; for, in them, he secured an inviolable asylum, in case of accidents; by this means, also, he kept in check the Pacha of Damascus, and procured excellent horses, of which he was always passionately fond. He courted, therefore, the Shaiks of Anaza, of Sardia, and Saker. Then, for the first time, were seen in Acre, those little shrivelled and swarthy Arabs, who were beheld with astonishment even by the Syrians: he furnished them with arms and cloathing: and the desert, also, for the first time, beheld men in close dresses, and armed with muskets and pistols, instead of bows and match-lock-guns.

For some years, the Pachas of Saide and Damascus had been incommoded by the Motoualis, who pillaged their lands, and refused their tribute. Daher, sensible of the advantage to be made of these allies, first in-

terposed as mediator, and afterwards, in order to accommodate the parties, offered to become security for the Motoualis, and pay their tribute. The Pachas accepted this proposal, which rendered their revenues certain, and Daher was content with the bargain he had made, since he had secured the friendship of a people who could bring ten thousand horse into the field.

The Shaik, however, did not peaceably enjoy the fruit of his labours; since he still had to fear the attacks of a jealous superior, and his power was shaken at home, by domestic enemies, almost as dangerous. Agreeable to the wretched policy of the east, he had bestowed separate governments on his sons, and placed them at a distance from him, in countries which were sufficient for their maintenance. From this arrangement it followed, that these Shaiks, seeing themselves the children of a great prince, wished to support a suitable state, so that their revenues soon fell short of their expences. Their subjects were oppressed by them and their agents, and complaints were made to Daher, who reprimanded them; and court flatterers irritating both parties, a quarrel was the consequence,

sequence, and war broke out between the father and his children. The brothers, too, frequently quarrelled with each other, which was another cause of war. Besides the Shaik was growing old, and his sons, who considered him as having arrived at the usual limits of human life, longed to anticipate the succession. He must necessarily leave a principal heir to his titles and power; each thought himself entitled to the preference, and this competition furnished a fresh subject of jealousy and dissention. From motives of narrow and contemptible policy, Daher fomented the discord; this might indeed produce the effect of keeping his soldiery in exercise, and inuring them to war; but, besides that it was productive of numberless disorders, it had the farther inconvenience of causing a dissipation of treasure, which obliged him to have recourse to ruinous expedients; the custom-house duties were augmented, and commerce, unable to support the additional burthen, rapidly declined. These civil wars, besides, were destructive to agriculture, which cannot be injured, without the consequences being always sensibly felt in a state so limited as the small territories of Daher.

Nor did the Divan of Constantinople behold without jealousy, the increasing power of Daher; and his ambitious views, which were now become apparent, increased its suspicions, which were far from being removed, by a request he soon after presented. Till that time, he had only held his domains under the title of a renter, and by annual lease. His vanity could no longer submit to this restriction; and, as he possessed all the essentials of power, he aspired to its titles: nay, perhaps, he thought them necessary, more effectually to establish his authority over his children, and his subjects. About the year, 1768, he, therefore, solicited a permanent investiture of his government, for himself and his successor, and demanded to be proclaimed, *Shaik of Acre, Prince of Princes, Governor of Nazareth, Tabaria, and Safad, and Shaik of all Galilee*. The Porte conceded every thing to fear and money: but this proof of his ambition, awakened more and more her jealousy and displeasure.

There were, besides, too many causes of complaint, which though palliated by Daher, could not but increase this distrust, and rouse a desire of vengeance. Such was the adventure of the celebrated pillage of the Caravan

Caravan of Mecca, in 1757. Sixty thousand pilgrims plundered, and dispersed over the desert, a great number destroyed by sword or famine, women reduced to slavery, the loss of immense riches, and, above all, the sacrilegious violation of so solemn an act of religion produced a commotion in the empire, which is not yet forgotten. The plundering Arabs were the Allies of Daher, who received them at Acre, and there permitted them to sell their booty. The Porte loaded him with the bitterest reproaches, but he endeavoured to exculpate himself, and to appease the Divan, by sending the white banner of the prophet to Constantinople.

Such also was the affair of the Maltese Corsairs. For some years they had infested the coasts of Syria, and, under the false pretext of a neutral flag, were received into the road of Acre: where they unloaded their spoils, and sold the prizes they had taken from the Turks. No sooner were these abuses divulged, than the Mahometans exclaimed against the sacrilege, and the Porte thundered vengeance. Daher pleaded ignorance of the fact, and, to prove he no way favoured a commerce so disgraceful to the

state and to religion, armed two galliots, and sent them to sea, with ostensible orders to drive off the Maltese. But the fact is, that these galliots committed no hostilities against the Maltese, but served, on the contrary, to correspond with them at sea, remote from all witnesses. Daher did more: he pretended the road of Haifa was without defence; that the enemy might take shelter there in spite of him, and required the Porte to build a fortress there, and provide it with cannon, at the expence of the Sultan: his demand was complied with, and Daher, shortly after, procured the fort to be adjudged useless, demolished it, and transported the brass cannon from thence to Acre.

These things kept alive the discontent and alarms of the Divan, and though these were diminished by the great age of Daher; the turbulent spirit of his sons, and the military talents of Ali, the eldest of them, still gave the Porte much uneasiness: she dreaded to see an independent power perpetuate itself, and even become formidable; but, steady to her ordinary system, refrained from open hostilities, and proceeded by secret means: she sent Capidjis, excited domestic quarrels, and had

had recourse to measures capable at least of preventing, for a time, the consequences she feared.

The most persevering among all the agents she employed, was that Osman, Pacha of Damascus, whom we have seen act a leading part in the war of Ali Bey. He had merited the favour of the Porte, by discovering the treasures of Soliman Pacha, whose Mamlouk he was. The personal hatred he bore to Daher, and the known activity of his character, were still greater recommendations. He was considered as a proper counterpoise to Daher, and was accordingly named Pacha of Damascus in 1760. To give him additional weight, his two sons were appointed to the pachalics of Tripoli and Saïde; and, to throw still greater power into his hands, in 1765, Jerusalem and all Palestine were added to his appanage.

Osman perfectly seconded the views of the Porte: As soon as he had taken possession of his government, he greatly annoyed Daher. He augmented the tribute of the lands he held under the pachalic of Damascus: the Shaik resisted, the Pacha menaced, and it was evident the quarrel would come to a speedy issue. Osman watched the opportunity to strike a blow
which

which should bring the matter to decision: this at length presented itself, and war broke out.

Every year the Pacha of Damascus makes what is called the circuit (*a*) of his government, the object of which is to levy the miri or impost on the lands. On this occasion he always takes with him a body of troops, strong enough to support his authority. He thought to avail himself of this opportunity to surprise Daher; and, followed by a numerous body of troops, took his route, as usual, towards the country of Nablous. Daher was then besieging a castle defended by two of his sons: his danger was the greater, as he relied on a truce with the Pacha, and he owed his deliverance to his good fortune.

One evening, at the moment he least expected it, a Tartar courier (*b*) brought him some letters from Constantinople. Daher opened them, and, immediately suspending all hostilities, dispatched a horseman to his children, and desired them to prepare a supper for him and three of his attendants, for that

(*a*) This is practised in almost all the great pachalics, where the vassals are in but little subjection.

(*b*) The Tartars perform the office of couriers in Turkey.

he

he had affairs to communicate of the last importance to them all. The character of Daher was known; his sons obey him; he arrives at the appointed hour; they sup cheerfully together; and, at the end of the repast, he produces his letters and reads them; they were from his spies at Constantinople, and to the following purport:—"That the
 " Sultan had deceived him in the last par-
 " don he had sent him; that he had, at the
 " same instant, delivered a *kat-sheerif* (c) against
 " his head and property; that every thing
 " was concerted between the three Pachas,
 " Osman, and his sons, to circumvent and
 " destroy him and his family; and that the
 " Pacha was marching in force towards Na-
 " blous to surprize him." The astonishment
 this intelligence excited, may easily be imagined; a council was immediately held, in which the opinions were divided. The greatest number were for marching with all their forces against the Pacha; but the eldest of

(c) *Kat-sheerif*, which words signify, *Noble signature*, is a letter of proscription conceived in these terms: "*Such a one, who art the slave of my Sublime Porte, go to such a one, my slave, and bring back his head to my feet, at the peril of thy own.*"

Daher's

Daher's sons, A who has rendered himself illustrious in Syria, by his exploits, represented, that a large army could not march quick enough to surprise the Pacha; that he would have time to provide for his defence, and the disgrace of violating the truce fall on them; that nothing could be effected but by a *coup de main*, which he would take upon himself. He demanded five hundred horse; his courage was known, and his demand acceded to. He set off immediately, marching all night, and concealing himself during the day; and the following night was so expeditious, as to reach the enemy early in the morning of the second day. The Turks, according to custom, were asleep in their camp, without order, and without centinels. Ali and his cavalry fell upon them, sabre in hand, cutting to pieces every thing that came in their way. All was panic and tumult; the very name of Ali spread terror throughout the camp, and the Turks fled in the utmost confusion. The Pacha had not even time to put on his pelisse: scarcely was he out of his tent, before Ali arrived, who made himself master of his coffer, his shawls, his

his pelisses, his poniard, his nerkeel (*d*), and, to compleat his success, the kat-sheerif of the Sultan. From this moment there was open war, which was carried on, according to the custom of the country, by inroads and skirmishes, in which the Turks but rarely gained the advantage.

The expences it occasioned soon drained the coffers of the Pacha; and, to reimburse them, he had recourse to the grand expedient of the Turks. He levied contributions on the towns, villages, and individuals; whoever was suspected of having money, was summoned, bastinadoed, and plundered. These oppressions had occasioned a revolt at Ramla in Palestine the very first year he obtained the government, which he suppressed by still more odious cruelties. Two years after, in 1767, similar conduct occasioned a revolt at Gaza. He renewed these proceedings at Yafa, in 1769, where, among other acts of despotism, he violated the law of nations, in the person of the Resident of Venice, John Damiana, a respectable old man, whom he put

(*d*) A pipe, in the Persian manner, consisting of a large flask filled with water, through which the smoke passes, and is purified, before it reaches the mouth.

to

to the torture, by five hundred strokes on the soles of his feet, and who could only preserve the feeble remains of life, by collecting from his own fortune, and the purses of all his friends; a sum of near sixty thousand livres, (twenty-five hundred pounds), for the Pacha. This tyranny is common in Turkey; but as it is not usually either so violent, or so general, such cruelties drove the oppressed to despair. The people began to murmur on every side, and Palestine, emboldened by the vicinity of Egypt, now in a state of rebellion, threatened to call in a foreign protector.

Under these circumstances, Ali Bey, the conqueror of Mecca and the Said, turned his projects of aggrandisement toward Syria. The alliance of Daher, the war with the Russians, which entirely occupied the Turks, and the discontents of the people, all conspired to favour his ambition. He accordingly published a manifesto in 1770, in which he declared, that God having bestowed a signal benediction on his arms, he thought himself bound, in duty, to make use of them for the relief of the people, and to repress the tyranny of Osman in Syria. He immediately

ly dispatched a body of Mamlouks to Gaza, who seized on Ramla and Loud. Their appearance divided the adjacent town of Yafa into two factions, one of which was desirous of submitting to the Egyptians; while the other was for calling in Osman, who flew thither immediately, and encamped near the town. Two days after, Daher was announced, who had likewise hastened thither for the same purpose. The inhabitants of Yafa, then, imagining themselves secure, shut their gates against the Pacha; but, in the night, while he was preparing to escape, a party of his troops, passing along the sea-shore, entered, by an opening in the wall, and sacked the city. The next day Daher appeared, and, not finding the Turks, took possession of Yafa, Ramla, and Loud, without resistance, in which towns he placed garrisons.

Things thus prepared, Mahommed Bey arrived in Palestine, with the grand army, in the month of February 1771, and followed the Shaik along the sea-coast to Acre. There, having been joined by twelve or thirteen hundred Motoualis, under the command of Nafif, and fifteen hundred Safadians, led by Ali, son of Daher, he marched in April towards

wards Damascus. We have already seen in what manner this combined army defeated the united forces of the Pachas, and how Mohammad, master of Damascus, and on the point of taking possession of the castle, on a sudden changed his design, and again took the road to Cairo. On this occasion, Ibrahim Sabbar, Minister of Daher, receiving no other explanation from Mohammad than menaces, wrote to him in the name of the Shaik, a letter filled with reproaches, which proved, eventually the cause, or, at least, the pretext of a fresh quarrel. Osman, however, on his return to Damascus, recommenced his oppressions and hostilities; and, imagining that Daher, chagrined by the unexpected news he had received, would not be prepared for defence, he formed the project of surprising him even in Acre. But scarcely was he on his march, when Ali Daher, and Nasif, informed of his intentions, proposed to turn the tables on him: they, therefore, secretly left Acre, and learning he was encamped on the western bank of Lake Houla, arrived there, at break of day, took possession of the bridge of Yakoub, which they found negligently guarded, and fell on him sabre in
and

hand, in his camp, where they made a dreadful carnage. This, like the affair of Nablous, was a total defeat; the Turks, pressed on the land side, threw themselves into the lake, hoping to swim across it; but the terror and confusion of this multitude of men and horses, which mutually embarrassed each other, was such, that the enemy made a prodigious slaughter, while still greater numbers perished in the water and mud of the lake. The Pacha was thought to be among the latter, but he had the good fortune to escape, being saved by two negroes, who swam across with him on their shoulders. In the interim, Darouish, son of Osmond, Pacha of Saide, had engaged the Druzes in his cause, and fifteen hundred Okkals had arrived, under the command of Ali-Djambalat, to reinforce the garrison; while the Emir Yousef, descending into the valley of the Motoualis with twenty-five thousand men, laid waste all before him with fire and sword. Ali Daher and Nasif, on this intelligence, directed their course instantly on that side, and, on the 21st of October, 1771, happened the action in which an advanced corps of five hundred Motoualis entirely defeated the

whole army of the Druzes; whose flight spread terror through Saide, whither they were closely pursued by the Safadians. Ali Djambalat, despairing to defend the town, evacuated it without delay; but not before it had been pillaged by his Okkals. The Motoualis, finding it without defence, entered and plundered it in their turn. At length, the chiefs put an end to the pillage, and took possession in the name of Daher, who appointed Degnizla, a native of Barbary, renowned for his bravery, to be his *Motfallam*, or governor.

The Porte, terrified at the defeats she had met with, both from the Russians, and her rebellious subjects, now offered peace to Daher, on very advantageous conditions. To induce him to accede to them, she removed the Pachas of Damascus, Saide, and Tripoli; disavowed their conduct, and solicited a reconciliation with the Shaik. Daher, now eighty-five or eighty-six years old, was willing to accept this offer, that he might terminate his days in peace; but he was diverted from this intention by his minister, Ibrahim; who did not doubt but Ali Bey would, the ensuing winter, proceed to the conquest of Syria, and
that

that this Mamlouk would cede a considerable portion of that country to Daher, and in the future aggrandizement of his master's power, he hoped the advancement of his own private fortune, and the means of adding fresh treasures to those he had already amassed by his insatiable avarice. Seduced by this brilliant prospect, Daher rejected the propositions of the Porte, and prepared to carry on the war with redoubled activity.

Such was the state of affairs, when, in the month of February, of the following year, Mohammad Bey reared the standard of rebellion against his patron Ali. Ibrahim, at first, flattered himself this revolt would have no serious consequences; but he was soon undeceived, by the news of Ali's expulsion, and his subsequent arrival at Acre, as a fugitive and suppliant. This stroke revived the courage of all the enemies of Daher, and the Turkish faction in Yafa availed themselves of it to regain their ascendancy. They appropriated to themselves the effects left there by the little fleet of Rodoan; and, aided by a Shaik of Nablous, began a revolt in the city, and opposed the passage of the Mamlouks. Circumstances now became very cri-

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tical, as the speedy arrival of a large army of Turks was announced, which was assembled near Aleppo: Daher, it may be, ought to have remained in the vicinity of Acre; but imagining his caution and alertness would secure him from every attack, he marched towards Nablous, chastising the rebels as he passed, and joining Ali Bey, below Yafa, conducted him without opposition to Acre.

After a reception suitable to Arabian hospitality, they marched together against the Turks, who, under the command of seven Pachas, and in concert with the Druzes, were besieging Saide. In the road of Haifa were some Russian vessels, which, profiting by the revolt of Daher, were taking in provisions: the Shaik negotiated with them, and, for a present of six hundred purses, engaged them to second his operations by sea. His army, at this time, might consist of five or six thousand Safadian and Motouali cavalry, eight hundred of Ali's Mamlouks, and about one thousand Barbary infantry. The Turks, on the contrary, united with the Druzes, amounted to ten thousand cavalry, and twenty thousand peasants, who, as soon as they received intelligence of the approach of the enemy, raised

raised the siege, and retreated to the north of the town, not intending flight, but to wait for Daher, and give him battle; and the armies engaged the next day, in better order than had hitherto been usual.

The Turkish army, extending from the sea to the foot of the mountains, was drawn up in platoons, nearly in the same line. The Okkals, on foot, were posted on the sea-shore behind some hedges of Nopals, and in trenches they had dug, to prevent a sally from the town, while the cavalry occupied the plain in no little confusion. Towards the centre, and advanced a little in the front, were eight cannon, twelve and twenty-four pounders, the only artillery hitherto made use of in the open field. At the foot of the mountains, and on their declivity, was the militia of the Druzes, armed with muskets, without entrenchments, and without cannon. On the side of Daher, the Motoualis and the Safadians, ranged themselves, so as to present the greatest front possible, and endeavoured to occupy as much of the plain as the Turks. The right wing, commanded by Nasif, consisted of the Motoualis, and the thousand Barbary infantry, intended to oppose the

peasant Druzes. The other, led on by Ali Daher, was left without support against the Okkals; but he relied on the Russian boats and vessels, which, keeping close in with the shore, advanced in a line parallel to the army. In the centre, were the eight hundred Mamlouks, and, behind them, Ali Bey, with the aged Daher, who still animated his people, both by his words and his example.

The action was begun by the Russian vessels; and no sooner had they fired a few broadsides on the Okkals, than they retreated in confusion; the squadrons of cavalry now advancing, nearly in a line, came within cannon-shot of the Turks. Instantly the Mamlouks, anxious to justify the general opinion of their bravery, galloped full speed towards the enemy. The gunners, intimidated by their intrepidity, and seeing themselves on foot, between two lines of cavalry, unsupported, either by redoubts or infantry, fired their pieces with precipitation, and took to flight. The Mamlouks, who suffered but little from this volley, rushed in an instant amid the cannon, and fell headlong upon the cavalry of the enemy. They met but a feeble resistance, and, in the confusion which ensued, every

every one, not knowing what to do, or what was passing around him, was more disposed to fly than fight. The Pachas first set the example, and, in an instant, the flight became general. The Druzes, who never engage with good-will on the side of the Turks, presently left the field, and hid themselves in their mountains, and in less than an hour the plain was cleared. The allies, satisfied with their victory, would not risk a pursuit, in a country which would become more difficult the nearer they approached Bairout; but the Russian ships, to punish the Druzes, proceeded to cannonade that town, where they made a descent, and burnt three hundred houses.

Ali Bey and Daher, on their return to Acre, determined to take vengeance for the treachery of the people of Nablous and Yafa, and, in the beginning of July 1772, appeared before the latter city. They first proposed an accommodation, but the Turkish faction rejecting every proposition, they were compelled to have recourse to arms. This siege, properly speaking, was only a blockade, nor must we imagine the assailants made their approaches after the European

method. They had no other artillery, on either side, than a few large cannon, badly mounted, ill situated, and still worse served. The attacks were carried on neither by trenches, nor mines; and it must be owned that these were not necessary against a slight wall, without ditch or rampart. A breach was soon made, but the cavalry of Daher and Ali Bey shewed no great eagerness to pass it; the besieged having defended the inside with stones, stakes, and deep holes which they had dug. The whole attack was made with small arms, which killed very few, and eight months were wasted in this manner, in spite of the impatience of Ali Bey, who had alone the conduct of the siege. At length the besieged, exhausted with fatigue, and being in want of provisions, surrendered by capitulation, in the month of February 1773. Ali Bey placed a governor in the town, for Daher, and hastened to join the Shaik at Acre, where he found him occupied in preparations to enable him to return to Egypt, to accelerate which event, Ali contributed all in his power.

They waited only for a succour of six hundred men promised by the Russians, but the

the impatience of Ali Bey would not permit him to wait their arrival. Daher made use of every argument to detain him a few days longer. But finding nothing could alter his resolution, he sent fifteen hundred cavalry to accompany him, commanded by Otman, one of his sons. Not many days after, (in April 1773), the Russians arrived with the reinforcement, which, though less considerable than was expected, he greatly regretted he could not employ; but this regret was severely aggravated, when Daher saw his son and his cavalry return as fugitives, to announce to him their own disaster, and the fate of Ali Bey. He was the more affected at this misfortune, as, instead of an useful ally, powerful in resources, he acquired an enemy formidable from his hatred and activity. This, at his age, was a most afflicting prospect, and it is highly to his honour, that he bore it with proper fortitude.

A fortunate event combined, at this juncture, with his natural firmness, to console him, and divert his attention. The Emir Yousef, thwarted by a powerful faction, had been obliged to solicit the assistance of the Pacha of Damascus, to maintain himself in possession

possession of Bairout. He had placed there a creature of the Turks, the Bey, Ahmed-el-Djezzar, of whom I have spoken before. No sooner was this man invested with the command of the town, than he determined to seize it for himself. He began by converting to his own use, fifty thousand piaſters belonging to the prince, and openly declared he acknowledged no maſter but the Sultan. The Emir, aſtoniſhed at this perfidy, in vain demanded juſtice of the Pacha of Damascus. Djezzar was diſavowed, but not ordered to reſtore the town. Piqued at this reſuſal, the Emir complied at length with the general wiſh of the Druzes, and contracted an alliance with Daher. The treaty was concluded near Sour, and the Shaik, charmed with acquiring ſuch powerful friends, went immediately with them to reduce the rebel. The Ruſſian ſhips, which, for ſome time paſt, had never quitted the coaſt, now joined the Druzes, and, for a ſecond ſum of fix hundred purſes, agreed to cannonade Bairout. This double attack had the deſired ſucceſs. Djezzar, notwithſtanding his vigorous reſiſtance, was obliged to capitulate; he ſurrendered himſelf to Daher alone, and followed him to Acre,

Acre, from whence, as I have related, he escaped soon after.

The defection of the Druzes did not discourage the Turks: the Porte expecting great success in the intrigues she was then carrying on in Egypt, still entertained hopes of overcoming all her enemies; she again placed Osman at Damascus, and gave him an unlimited power over all Syria. The first use he made of this, was to assemble under his orders six Pachas, whose forces he led through the valley of Bekaa, to the village of Zahla, with intention to penetrate into the mountainous country. The strength of this army, and the rapidity of its march, spread consternation on every side, and the Emir Yousef, always timid and irresolute, already repented his alliance with Daher; but this brave chief, solicitous for the safety of his allies, took care to provide for their defence. The Turks had hardly been encamped six days, at the foot of the mountains, before they learnt that Ali, the son of Daher, was approaching to give them battle. Nothing more was necessary to intimidate them. In vain were they told the enemy had but five hundred horse, while they were upwards of five thousand

land strong: the name of Ali Daher so terrified them that this whole army fled, in one night, and left their camp, full of baggage and ammunition, to the inhabitants of Zahla.

After this success, it might be supposed Daher would have allowed himself time to breathe, and have turned his attention to preparations for his defence, which were become every day more necessary; but fortune had determined he should no longer enjoy any repose. For several years past, domestic troubles had accompanied foreign wars: and it was only by means of the latter, he had been able to appease the former. His children, who were themselves old men, were wearied of waiting so long for their inheritance; and, besides this constant disposition to revolt, had real grievances to complain of, which, by giving too much reason for their discontents, rendered them the more dangerous. For several years, the Christian Ibrahim, minister of the Shaik, had engrossed all his confidence, which he shamefully abused to gratify his own avarice. He dared not openly exercise the tyranny of the Turks; but he neglected no means, however unjust, by which he could amass money. He monopolized

lized every article of commerce; he alone had the sale of corn, cotton, and other articles of exportation; and he alone purchased cloths, indigo, sugars, and other merchandize. His avarice had frequently invaded the supposed privileges, and even the real rights of the Shaiks; they did not pardon him this abuse of power, and every day, furnishing fresh subjects of complaint, was productive of new disturbances. Daher, whose understanding began to be impaired by his extreme old age, did not adopt measures calculated to appease them. He called his children rebels, and ungrateful, and imagined he had no faithful and disinterested servant but Ibrahim: this infatuation served only to destroy all respect for his person, and to inflame and justify their discontents.

The unhappy effects of this conduct fully displayed themselves in 1774. Since the death of Ali Bey, Ibrahim, finding he had more to fear than hope, had abated something of his haughtiness. He no longer saw the same certainty of amassing money by making war. His allies, the Russians, in whom all his confidence was placed, began themselves to talk of peace; and these motives

tives determined him likewise to conclude it, for which purpose he entered into a Treaty with a Capidji whom the Porte maintained at Acre. It was agreed that Caher and his sons should lay down their arms, but retain the government of the country, by receiving the *Tails*, which are the symbols of this authority. But it was likewise stipulated, that Saide should be restored, and the Shaik pay the miri, as he had done formerly. These conditions were extremely dissatisfactory to the sons of Daher, and the more so because they were concluded without their participation. They deemed it disgraceful again to become tributaries, and were still more offended that the Porte had granted to none of them the title of their father; they therefore all revolted. Ali repaired to Palestine, and took up his quarters at Habroun; Ahmad and Seid retired to Nablous, Otman among the Arabs of Saker, and the remainder of the year passed in these dissensions.

Such was the situation of affairs, when, in the beginning of 1775, Mohammed-Bey appeared in Palestine, with all the forces he was able to collect. Gaza, destitute of ammunition,

nition, did not venture to resist. Yafa, proud of the part she had acted in former disputes, had more courage; the inhabitants took arms, and their resistance had nearly disappointed the vengeance of the Mamlouk; but every thing conspired to the destruction of Daher. The Druzes dared not stir; the Motoualis were discontented: Ibrahim summoned assistance from every quarter, but he offered no money, and his solicitations had no effect; he had not even the prudence to send provisions to the besieged. They were compelled to surrender, and the road to Acre was laid open to the enemy. As soon as the taking of Yafa was known, Ibrahim and Daher fled, and took refuge in the mountains of Safad. Ali Daher, confiding in the treaty between himself and Mohammad, took the place of his father; but soon perceiving he had been deceived, he took to flight, likewise, in his turn, and Acre remained in the possession of the Mamlouks.

It would have been difficult to foresee the consequences of this revolution, but the unexpected death of its author rendered it, of a sudden, of no effect. The flight of the Egyptians, leaving free the country

and capital of Daher, he lost no time in returning; but the storm was by no means appeased. He soon learnt that a Turkish fleet, under the command of Hassan, the celebrated Captain Pacha, was laying siege to Saide. He then discovered too late the perfidy of the Porte, which had lulled his vigilance by professions of friendship, while she was concerting with Mohammad Bey the means of his destruction. During a whole year that the Turks had been disengaged from the Russians, it was not difficult to foresee their intentions from their motions. Still, however, it was in his power to endeavour to prevent the consequences of this error; but, unfortunately, even this he neglected. Degnizla, bombarded in Saide without hope of succour, was constrained to evacuate the town; and the Captain Pacha appeared instantly before Acre. At sight of the enemy, a consultation was held how to escape the danger, and this led to a quarrel, which decided the fate of Daher.

In a general council, Ibrahim gave his opinion to repel force by force: his reasons were, that the Captain Pacha had but three large vessels; that he could neither make an
attack

attack by land, nor remain at anchor, without danger, before the castle; that there was a sufficient force of cavalry and Barbary infantry to hinder a descent, and that it was almost certain the Turks would relinquish the enterprize without attempting any thing. In opposition to him, Degnizla declared for peace; because resistance could only prolong the war; he maintained it was unreasonable to expose the lives of so many brave men, when the same object might be effected by less valuable means, that is by money; that he was sufficiently acquainted with the avarice of the Captain Pacha, to assert he would suffer himself to be corrupted; and was certain not only that he could procure his departure, but even make him a friend, for the sum of two thousand purses. This was precisely what Ibrahim dreaded; he therefore exclaimed against the measure, protesting there was not a medin in the Treasury. Daher supported his assertion. “The Shaik is in
 “the right,” replied Degnizla; “his servants
 “have long known that his generosity does not
 “suffer his money to stagnate in his coffers;
 “but does not the money they obtain from him
 “belong to him? And can it be believed that
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“ thus entitled to them we know not where to
“ find two thousand purses ?” At these words
Ibrahim, interrupting him, exclaimed, that
as for himself, no man could be poorer. “ Say
“ baser,” resumed Degnizla, transported with
rage. “ Who is ignorant, that for the last
“ fourteen years, you have been heaping up
“ enormous treasures ; that you have mono-
“ polized all the trade of the country ; that
“ you sell all the lands, and keep back the
“ payments that are due ; that in the war
“ of Mahommad Bey, you plundered the
“ whole territory of Gaza, carried away
“ all the corn, and left the inhabitants of
“ Yafa without the necessaries of life ?”

He was proceeding, when the Shaik, commanding silence, protested the innocence of his Minister, and accused Degnizla of envy and treachery. Degnizla instantly quitted the council, and assembling his countrymen, the Mograbians or Barbary Arabs, who composed the chief strength of the place, forbid them to fire upon the Captain Pacha.

Daher, however, determined to stand the attack, made every necessary preparation ; and, the next day, Hassan, approaching the castle, began the cannonade. Daher answered with
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the few pieces near him ; but in spite of his reiterated orders, the others did not fire. Finding himself betrayed, he mounted his horse ; and, leaving the town by the gate which opens towards the gardens, on the North, attempted to gain the country ; but, while he was passing along the walls of these gardens, a Mograbian soldier shot him with a musquet in the loins, and he fell from his horse, when the Barbary Arabs, instantly surrounding his body, cut off his head, which they carried to the Captain Pacha, who, according to the odious custom of the Turks, loaded it with insults while he surveyed it, and had it pickled, in order to carry it to Constantinople, as a present to the Sultan, and a spectacle to the people.

Such was the tragical end of a man, in many respects, worthy of a better fate. It is long since Syria has beheld among her chiefs so great a character. In military affairs, no man possessed more courage, activity, coolness, or resources. In politics, the noble frankness of his mind was not diminished even by his ambition. He was fond only of brave and open measures ; and heroically preferred the dangers of the field

to the wily intrigues of the cabinet; nor was it till he had taken Ibrahim for his minister that his conduct was blemished with a sort of duplicity which that Christian called Prudence. The reputation of his justice had established, throughout his states, a security unknown in Turkey. Differences in religion occasioned no disputes: he possessed the toleration, or, perhaps, the indifference, of the Bedouin Arabs. He had also preserved the simplicity of their customs and manners. His table was not different from that of a rich farmer; the utmost luxury of his dress never exceeded a few Pelisses, and he never wore any trinkets. The greatest expence he incurred was in blood mares, for some of which he even paid as high as twenty thousand livres, (eight hundred and twenty-five pounds.) He likewise loved women; but was so jealous of decency and decorum, that he ordered that every one taken in an act of gallantry, or offering insult to a woman, should suffer death: he had, in short, attained the difficult medium between prodigality and avarice, and was at once generous and economical. Whence was it then, that, with such great qualities, he did not further extend, and

more firmly establish his power? To this question a minute knowledge of his administration would furnish an easy answer, but I shall content myself with assigning the three principal causes.

First, His government wanted that internal good order, and justness of principle, without which all improvement must be slow and irregular.

Secondly, the early concessions he made to his children introduced a multitude of disorders, which prevented the improvement of agriculture, impoverished his finances, divided his forces, and prepared the downfall of himself and the independant state he had founded.

A third and more efficacious cause than all the rest, was the avarice of Ibrahim Sabbar. This man, abusing the confidence of his master, and the weakness incident to age, by his rapacity, alienated from him, his children, servants, and allies. His extortions even lay so heavy on the people, towards the end of his life, as to render them indifferent whether they returned under the Turkish yoke. His passion for money was so sordid, that, amid the wealth he was amassing, he lived only on

cheese and olives ; and, so great was his parsimony, that he frequently stopped at the shops of the poorest merchants, and partook of their frugal repast. He never wore any thing but dirty and ragged garments. To behold this meagre, one-eyed, wretch, one would have taken him rather for a beggar than the minister of a considerable state. By these vile practices, he amassed about twenty millions of French money, (eight hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds), which fell to the Turks. No sooner was the death of Daher known in Acre, than, the public indignation breaking out against Ibrahim, he was seized, and given up to the Captain Pacha, to whom no present could be more acceptable. The report of this man's treasures was general throughout Turkey ; it had contributed to animate the resentment of Mohammad Bey, and was the principal motive of the measures of the Captain Pacha. He no sooner had him in his power than he endeavoured to extort from him a declaration of the sums he possessed, and the place where they were concealed ; but Ibrahim firmly denied any such treasure existed. In vain did the Pacha employ caresses, menaces, and the torture ;

torture; all were ineffectual; and it was by other indications Hassan at length discovered, among the Fathers of the Holy Land, and at the houses of two French merchants, several chests, so large, and so full of gold, that the biggest required eight men to carry it. With this gold were found also several trinkets, such as pearls and diamonds, and, among others, the Kandjar of Ali Bey, the handle of which was estimated at upwards of two hundred thousand livres, (above eight thousand pounds). All this was conveyed to Constantinople with Ibrahim, who was loaded with chains. The Turks, ferocious and insatiable, still hoping to discover new treasures, inflicted on him the most cruel tortures, to force him to confession; but, it is asserted, he invariably maintained the firmness of his character, and perished with a courage worthy of a better cause.

After the death of Daher, the Captain Pacha confirmed Djezzar Pacha of Acre and Saide, and committed to him the care of completing the destruction of the rebels. Faithful to his instructions, Djezzar alternately attacked them by stratagem and force, and

so far succeeded, as to induce Otman, Seid, and Ahmad, to deliver themselves into his hands. Ali Daher alone refused, and him they wished for most. In the following year (1776), the Captain Pacha returned, and, in concert with Djezzar, besieged Ali, in Dair-Hanna, a strong-hold, about a day's journey from Acre, but he escaped them. To free themselves from their fears, they employed a stratagem worthy of their character. They suborned some Barbary Arabs, who, pretending to have been dismissed from Damascus, came into the country where Ali was encamped. After relating their history to his attendants, they applied to the hospitality of the Shaik. Ali received them as became an Arab, and a brave man ; but these wretches, falling on him in the night, massacred him, and hastened to demand their reward, though they were not able to bring with them his head. The Captain Pacha, having no longer any thing to fear from Ali, murdered his brothers, Seid, Ahmad, and their children. Otman alone, on account of his extraordinary talents for poetry, was spared, and carried to Constantinople. Degnizla, who was sent
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from that capital to Gaza, with the title of governor, perished on the road, not without suspicions of poison. The Emir Yousef, terrified at these events, made his peace with Djezzar; and, from that time, Galilee, again subjected to the Turks, only retains an unprofitable remembrance of the power of Daher.

C H A P.

C H A P. XXVI.

The distribution of Syria into Pachalics, under the Turkish government.

AFTER Sultan Selim I. had taken Syria from the Mamlouks, he subjected that province, like the rest of the empire, to the government of Viceroys, or Pachas (*a*), invested with unlimited power. The more effectually to secure his authority, he divided the country into five Governments, or *Pachalics*, which division still remains. These Pachalics are those of Aleppo, Tripoly, and Saide, lately removed to Acre; that of Damascus, and, lastly, that of Palestine, the seat of which is sometimes at Gaza, and sometimes at Jerusalem. Since the time of Selim, the limits of these Pachalics have often varied, but their general extent has always been nearly the same. I shall now proceed to give a more circumstantial detail of the most interesting particulars of their present state, such as the revenues, productions, forces, and most remarkable places.

(*a*) The Turkish word *Pacha*, is formed of the two Persian words *Pa-shah*, which literally signify *Viceroy*.

C H A P.

C H A P. XXVII.

Of the Pachalic of Aleppo.

THE Pachalic of Aleppo comprehends the country, extending from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean, between two lines, one drawn from Scandaroon to Beer, along the mountains; the other from Beles to the sea, by Mara, and the bridge of Shoger. This space principally consists of two plains; that of Antioch to the west, and that of Aleppo to the east: the north and the sea coast are occupied by considerably high mountains, known to the ancients by the names of Amanus, and of Rhofus. In general, the soil of this government is fat and loamy. The lofty and vigorous plants, which shoot up every where after the winter rains, prove its fertility, but its actual fruitfulness is but little. The greatest part of the lands lies waste; scarcely can we trace any marks of cultivation, in the environs of the towns and villages. Its principal produce consists in wheat, barley, and cotton, which are found especially in the flat country. In the mountains,

tains, they rather chuse to cultivate the vine, mulberry, olive, and fig-trees. The sides of the hills towards the sea-coast are appropriated to tobacco, and the territory of Aleppo, to Pistachios. The pasturage is not to be reckoned, because that is abandoned to the wandering Hordes of the Turkmen and Curds.

In the greater part of the Pachalics, the Pacha is, as his title imports, at once the Viceroy and Farmer-general of the country; but in that of Aleppo, he does not possess the latter office. This the Porte has bestowed on a *Mebassel*, or collector, who is immediately accountable for what he receives. His lease is only for a year. The present rent of his farm is eight hundred purses, which make a million of French money, (above forty thousand pounds); but to this must be added, the *price of the babousses* (*b*), or a present of eighty or one hundred thousand livres, (three or four thousand pounds), to purchase the favour of the Visir, and men in office. For these two sums, the farmer receives all the duties of the government, which

(*b*) Turkish slippers.

are;

are; First the produce of import and export duties on merchandize coming from Europe, India, and Constantinople, and on that exported in exchange. Secondly, The taxes paid by the herds of cattle brought every year by the Turkmans and Curds, from Armenia and the Diarbekar, to be sold in Syria. Thirdly, The fifth of the salt works of Djeboul. And, lastly, The Miri, or land-tax. These united may produce from fifteen to sixteen hundred thousand livres, (above sixty thousand pounds).

The Pacha, deprived of this lucrative branch of the administration, receives a fixed allowance of eighty thousand piasters, (eight thousand three hundred add thirty pounds). This revenue has always been inadequate to the expences; for, besides the troops he is obliged to maintain, and the reparation of the highways and fortresses, the expences of which he is to defray, he is under the necessity of making large presents to the ministers, in order to keep his place; but the Porte adds to the account, the contributions he may levy on the Curds and Turkmans, and his extortions from the villages and individuals; nor do the Pachas come short of this calculation.

calculation. Abdi Pacha, who governed twelve or thirteen years ago, 'carried off, at the end of fifteen months, upwards of four millions of livres, (one hundred and sixty thousand pounds) by laying under contribution every trade, even the very cleaners of tobacco pipes; and, very lately, another of the same name has been obliged to fly for similar oppressions. The former was rewarded by the Divan with the command of an army against the Russians; but if the latter has not enriched himself, he will be strangled as an extortioner. Such is the ordinary progress of affairs in Turkey!

Custom requires that the commission of the Pacha should be only for three months; but it is frequently extended to six, and even to a year. His office is to retain the province in obedience, and provide for the security of the country against every foreign and domestic enemy. For this purpose he maintains five or six hundred horse, and about the same number of infantry. Besides these, he has the command of the Janisaries, who are a sort of enrolled national militia. As this corps is found throughout all Syria, it will
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be proper to say a few words concerning its constitution.

The Janisaries I have mentioned consist, in each Pachalic, of a certain number of enrolled men, who must hold themselves ready to march whenever they are required. As there are certain privileges and exemptions attached to their body, there is a competition to obtain admission into it. Formerly they were subject to regular exercise and discipline; but all observance of this has so declined, within the last sixty or eighty years, that there no longer remains the slightest trace of their ancient good order. These pretended soldiers are only a croud of artizans and peasants, as ignorant as the rest of that class, but infinitely less tractable. When a Pacha abuses his authority, they are always the first to erect the standard of sedition. They deposed and expelled Abdi Pacha from Aleppo, and compelled the Porte to send another in his stead. The Turkish government revenges itself, it is true, by ordering the most active mutineers to be strangled; but, on the first opportunity, the Janisaries create other chiefs, and affairs return to their usual course. The Pachas, seeing themselves thwarted by this national

national militia, have had recourse to the expedient made use of in similar cases; they have taken foreign soldiers into their service, who have neither friends nor families in the country. These are of two sorts, cavalry and infantry.

The cavalry, who alone merit the name of soldiers, for this reason assume the appellation of *Daoula* or *Deleti*, and likewise *Delibashes* and *Lawend*, from whence we have formed *Leventi*. Their arms are short sabres, pistols, muskets, and lances. They wear a kind of cap, which is a long cylinder of black felt, nine or ten inches high, and without any projecting rim; it is extremely inconvenient, as it does not shade the eyes, and easily falls off their bald heads. Their saddles are made in the English manner, of a single skin stretched upon a wooden tree; they are bare, but not the less incommodious for this, as they throw out the legs of the rider, so as to prevent him from clinging; in the rest of their accoutrements and cloathing, they resemble the Mamlouks: with this difference, that they are not provided with so good. Their ragged clothes, their rusty arms, and their horses of different sizes, make them resemble banditti
more

more than soldiers; and, in fact, the greatest part of them have first distinguished themselves in the former capacity, nor have they greatly changed in adopting their second occupation. Almost all the cavalry in Syria are Turkmans, Curds, or Caramanians; who, after exercising the trade of robbers, in their own country, seek employment and an asylum near the person of the Pacha. Throughout the empire, these troops are, in like manner, formed of plunderers, who roam from place to place. From want of discipline, they retain their former manners, and are the scourge of the country, which they lay waste, and of the peasants, whom they often pillage by open force.

The infantry are a corps still inferior in every respect. Formerly they were procured from the inhabitants of the country by forced enlistments; but, within the last fifty or sixty years, the peasants of Tunis, Algiers, and Morocco, have thought proper to seek in Syria and in Egypt, that respect which is denied them in their own country. They alone, under the name of *Magarba*, *Mograbians*, or *Men of the West*, compose the infantry of the Pachas. So that, by a whimsical exchange, it

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happens,

happens, that the soldiery of the Barbary States consist of Turks, while that of the Turks is composed of the natives of Barbary. It is impossible for troops to be less encumbered than these; for their whole accoutrements and baggage are confined to a rusty firelock, a large knife, a leathern bag, a cotton shirt, a pair of drawers, a red cap, and sometimes slippers. Their pay is five piastres (about ten shillings and ten-pence) per month, out of which they are obliged to furnish themselves with arms and cloathing. They are maintained at the expence of the Pacha; which, altogether, may be esteemed tolerable encouragement; the pay of the cavalry is double, and each horseman has, besides this, his horse and his ration, which is a measure of chopped straw, and fifteen pounds of barley a day. These troops are divided, in the ancient Tartar manner, by *bairaks*, or colours; each bairak is reckoned ten men, but they rarely consist of above six effectives: the reason of which is, that the *Agas*, or commanders of colours, being entrusted with the pay of the soldiers, maintain as few as possible, to profit by the deficiency. The superior *Agas* tolerate these abuses, and partake of the spoils; nay,

hay, the Pachas themselves disregard them, and, in order to avoid the payment of the complete number, connive at the rapacity and want of discipline of their troops.

In consequence of such wretched government, the greater part of the Pachalics in the empire are impoverished and laid waste. This is the case in particular with that of Aleppo. In the ancient *defstars*, or registers of imposts, upwards of three thousand two hundred villages were reckoned; but, at present, the collector can scarcely find four hundred. Such of our merchants as have resided there twenty years, have themselves seen the greater part of the environs of Aleppo become depopulated. The traveller meets with nothing but houses in ruins, cisterns rendered useless, and fields abandoned. Those who cultivated them are fled into the towns, where the population is absorbed, but where at least the individual conceals himself among the crowd from the rapacious hand of despotism.

The places which merit most attention in this Pachalic are, first, the city of Aleppo, called by the Arabs *Halab* (c). This city is

(c) This is the name of which the ancient geographers made *Chalyben*: the *ch* represents here the Spanish *jota*; and

the capital of the province, and the ordinary residence of the Pacha. It is situated in the vast plain which extends from the Orontes to the Euphrates, and which, towards the south, terminates in the desert. The situation of Aleppo, beside the advantage of a rich and fruitful soil, possesses also that of a stream of fresh water, which never becomes dry. This rivulet, which is about as large as that of the *Gobelins* at Paris (or the New River near London) rises in the mountains of Aentab, and terminates six leagues below Aleppo, in a morass full of wild boars and pelicans. Near Aleppo, its banks, instead of the naked rocks which line them in the upper part of its course, are covered with a fertile earth, and laid out in gardens, or rather orchards, which, in a hot country, and especially in Turkey, cannot but be delightful. The city is in itself one of the most agreeable in Syria, and is, perhaps, the cleanest and best built of any in Turkey. On whatever side it is approached, its numerous minarets and domes present an

it is remarkable, that the modern Greeks still render the Arabic *ha* by the same sound of *jota*; which occasions a thousand double meanings in their conversation, as the Arabs have the *jota* in another letter.

agreeable

agreeable prospect to the eye fatigued with the continued sameness of the brown and parched plains. In the center is an artificial mountain, surrounded by a dry ditch, on which is a ruinous fortress. From hence we have a fine prospect of the whole city, and, to the north, discover the snowy tops of the mountains of Bailan; and, on the west, those which separate the Orontes from the sea; while, to the south and east, the eye can discern as far as the Euphrates. In the time of Omar, this castle stopped the progress of the Arabs for several months, and was, at last, taken by treachery, but, at present, would not be able to resist the feeblest assault. Its slight wall, low, and without a buttress, is in ruins; its little old towers are in no better condition; and it has not four cannon fit for service, not excepting a culverine, nine feet long, taken from the Persians at the siege of Basra (Bassora). Three hundred and fifty Janisaries, who should form the garrison, are busy in their shops, and the Aga scarcely finds room in it to lodge his retinue. It is remarkable that this Aga is named immediately by the Porte, which, ever suspicious, divides, as much as possible, the different offices. Within the

walls of the castle is a well, which, by means of a subterraneous communication, derives its water from a spring a league and a quarter distant. In the environs of the city, we find a number of large square stones, on the top of which is a turban of stone, and which are so many tombs. There are many rising grounds round it, which, in case of a siege, would greatly facilitate the approaches of the assailants. Such, among others, is that on which the house of the Dervises stands, and which commands the canal and the rivulet: Aleppo, therefore, cannot be esteemed a place of importance in war, though it be the key of Syria to the north; but, considered as a commercial city, it has a different appearance. It is the emporium of Armenia and the Diarbekar; sends caravans to Bagdad, and into Persia; and communicates with the Persian Gulph and India, by Basra; with Egypt and Mecca by Damascus; and with Europe by Skandaroon (Alexandretta) and Latakia. Commerce is there principally carried on by barter. The chief commodities are raw or spun cottons, coarse linens fabricated in the villages; silk stuffs manufactured in the city, copper, *bourrers* (coarse cloths) like those of Rouen,

Rouen, goats hair brought from Natolia; the gall nuts of the Kourdestan, the merchandize of India, such as shawls (*d*) and muslins; and pistachio nuts of the growth of the neighbourhood. The articles supplied by Europe, are the Languedoc cloths, cochineal, indigo, sugar, and some other groceries. The coffee of America, though prohibited, is introduced, and serves to mix with that of Moka. The French have at Aleppo a consul, and seven counting-houses; the English and the Venetians two, and the merchants of Leghorn and Holland one. The Emperor appointed a consul there, in 1784, in the person of a rich Jew merchant, who shaved his beard to assume the uniform and the sword. Russia has also sent one very lately.

Aleppo is not exceeded in extent by any city in Turkey, except Constantinople and Cairo, and perhaps Smyrna. The number of

(*d*) Shawls are woollen handkerchiefs, an ell wide, and near two long. The wool is so fine and silky, that the whole handkerchief may be contained in the two hands closed: It is said that no wool is employed but that of lambs torn from the belly of their mother before the time of birth. The most beautiful shawls are brought from Cashmire: their price is from 150 livres (about six guineas), to 1200 livres (or 50l. sterling).

inhabitants has been computed at two hundred thousand; but, in these calculations, certainty is impossible. However if we observe, that this city is not larger than Nantes or Marseilles, and that the houses consist only of one story, we shall, perhaps, not think it probable they exceed a hundred thousand. The people of this city, both Turks and Christians, are, with reason, esteemed the most civilized in all Turkey; and the European merchants no where enjoy so much liberty, or are treated with so much respect.

The air of Aleppo is very dry and piercing, but, at the same time, very salubrious for all who are not troubled with asthmatic complaints. The city, however, and the environs, are subject to a singular endemial disorder, which is called the ringworm or pimple of Aleppo; it is in fact a pimple which is at first inflammatory, and at length becomes an ulcer of the size of a nail. The usual duration of this ulcer is one year; it commonly fixes on the face, and leaves a scar with which almost all the inhabitants are disfigured. It is alledged that every stranger, who resides there three months, is attacked with it; experience has taught that the best mode of treatment

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is to make use of no remedy. The cause of this malady is unknown; but I suspect it proceeds from the quality of the water, as it is likewise frequent in the neighbouring villages, in some parts of the Diarbekar, and even in certain districts near Damascus, where the soil and the water have the same appearances.

Every body has heard of the pigeons of Aleppo, which serve as couriers at Alexandretta and Bagdad. This use of them, which is not fabulous, has been laid aside for the last thirty or forty years, because the Curd robbers killed the pigeons. The manner of sending advice by them was this: they took pairs which had young ones, and carried them on horseback to the place from whence they wished them to return, taking care to let them have a full view. When any advices were received, the correspondent tied a billet to the pigeon's foot, and let her loose. The bird, impatient to see its young, flew off like lightning, and arrived at Aleppo in ten hours from Alexandretta, and in two days from Bagdad. It was not difficult for them to find their way back, since Aleppo may be discovered at an immense distance. This pigeon has nothing peculiar

peculiar in its form, except its nostrils, which, instead of being smooth and even, are swelled and rough.

The conspicuous situation of Aleppo brings numbers of sea birds thither, and affords the curious a singular amusement: if you go after dinner on the terraces of the houses, and make a motion as if throwing bread, numerous flocks of birds will instantly fly round you, though at first you cannot discover one; but they are floating aloft in the air, and descend in a moment to seize, in their flight, the morsels of bread, which the inhabitants frequently amuse themselves with throwing to them.

Next to Aleppo, Antioch, called by the Arabs Antakia, claims our attention. This city, anciently renowned for the luxury of its inhabitants, is now no more than a ruinous town, whose houses, built with mud and straw, and narrow and miry streets, exhibit every appearance of misery and wretchedness. It is situated on the southern bank of the Orontes, at the extremity of an old decayed bridge, and is covered to the south by a mountain, upon the slope of which is a wall, built by the Crusaders. The distance between
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the present town and this mountain may be about four hundred yards, which space is occupied by gardens and heaps of rubbish, but presents nothing interesting.

Notwithstanding the unpolished manners of its inhabitants, Antioch was better calculated than Aleppo to be the emporium of the Europeans. By clearing the mouth of the Orontes, which is six leagues lower down, boats might have been towed up that river, though they could not have *sailed* up, as Pococke has asserted; its current is too rapid. The natives, who never knew the name Orontes, call it, on account of the swiftness of its stream, El-aasi (*e*), that is, the Rebel. Its breadth, at Antioch, is about forty paces. Seven leagues above that town, it passes by a lake abounding in fish, and especially in eels. A great quantity of these are salted every year, but not sufficient for the numerous fasts of the Greek Christians. It is to be remembered, we no longer hear at Antioch, either of the Grove of Daphne, or of the voluptuous scenes of which it was the theatre.

(*e*) This is the name which the Greek Geographers have rendered by *Axios*.

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The plain of Antioch, though the soil of it is excellent, is uncultivated, and abandoned to the Turkmans; but the hills on the side of the Orontes, particularly opposite Serkin, abound in plantations of figs and olives, vines, and mulberry trees, which, a thing uncommon in Turkey, are planted in quincunx (*f*), and exhibit a landscape worthy our finest provinces.

The Macedonian king, Seleucus Nicator, who founded Antioch, built also, at the mouth of the Orontes, on the northern bank, a large and well fortified city, which bore his name, but of which at present, not a single habitation remains: nothing is to be seen but heaps of rubbish, and works in the adjacent rock, which prove that this was once a place of very considerable importance. In the sea, also, may be perceived the traces of two piers, which are indications of an ancient port, now choaked up. The inhabitants of the country go thither to fish, and call the name of the place Souaidia. From thence, as we proceed to the north, the sea-coast is shut in by a

(*f*) This mode of planting in *Quincunx*, is likewise in use among the Druzes, and is particularly mentioned by Baron de Tott.

chain of high mountains, known to the ancient geographers by the name of *Rbyfus*: which name was probably derived from the Syriac, and still subsists in that of *Ras-el-Kanzir*, or Cape of the Wild Boar, a headland on this coast.

The Gulph, towards the north-east, is remarkable for nothing but the town of Alexandretta, or Skandaroon, of which it bears the name. This town, situated on the sea-shore, is, properly speaking, nothing but a village, without walls, in which the tombs are more numerous than the houses, and which entirely owes its existence to the road which it commands. This is the only road, in all Syria, where vessels anchor on a solid bottom, without their cables being liable to chafe; but, in other respects, it has so many serious inconveniencies, that necessity alone can prevent the merchants from abandoning it.

First, It is exposed, during winter, to a wind, peculiar to this place, called by the French sailors *le Ragui*, which, rushing from the snowy summits of the mountains, frequently forces ships to drag their anchors several leagues.

Secondly,

Secondly, when the snow begins to cover the mountains which surround the Gulph, tempestuous winds arise which prevent vessels from entering for three or four months together.

Thirdly, The road from Alexandretta to Aleppo, by the plain, is infested by Curd robbers, who conceal themselves in the neighbouring rocks (*g*), and frequently attack and plunder the strongest caravans.

Another reason, more forcible than these, is the unwholesomeness of the air of Alexandretta, which is extreme. It may be affirmed, that it every year carries off one third of the crews of the vessels which remain there during the summer; nay, ships frequently lose all their men in two months. The season for this epidemic disorder is principally from May to the end of September: it is an intermitting fever of the most malignant kind, and is accompanied with obstructions of the liver, which terminate in a dropsy. The cities of Tripoli, Acre, and Larneca in Cyprus,

(*g*) The place they are found in exactly corresponds with the Castle of Gyndarus, which, in the time of Strabo, was a haunt of robbers.

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are subject to the same disorder, though in a less degree. In all these places the same local circumstances seem to have given birth to the contagion; the cause of it in all is to be ascribed to the adjoining morasses, stagnant waters, and consequent vapours and mephitic exhalations: a convincing proof of this is, that this disorder does not prevail in seasons when no rain has fallen. But, unfortunately, Alexandretta is condemned, from its situation, to be never wholly exempt from it; for the plain on which the town is built is so low and flat (*b*) that the rivulets, finding no declivity, can never reach the sea. When they are swelled by the winter rains, the sea, swelled likewise by tempests, hinders their discharging themselves into it; hence their waters, forced to spread themselves, form lakes in the plain. On the approach of the summer, the waters become corrupted by the heat, and exhale vapours equally corrupt, which cannot disperse, being confined by the mountains that encircle the gulph. The

(*b*) This plain, which is about a league in breadth, and lies at the foot of the mountains, has been formed by the earth, brought down by the torrents and rains.

entrance

entrance of the bay, besides, lies to the west, which, in those countries, is the most unhealthy exposure when it corresponds with the sea. The labour necessary to remedy this would be immense, and after all insufficient; and, indeed, such an undertaking would be absolutely impossible, under a government like that of the Turks. A few years ago, the merchants of Aleppo, disgusted with the numerous inconveniencies of Alexandretta, wished to abandon that port and carry the trade to Latakia. They proposed to the Pacha of Tripoli to repair the harbour at their own expence, provided he would grant them an exemption from all duties for ten years. To induce him to comply with their request, the agent they employed talked much of the advantage which would, *in time*, result to the whole country: "But, what signifies to me what may happen *in time*, replied the Pacha? I was yesterday at Marach; to-morrow, perhaps, I shall be at Djedda; why should I deprive myself of present advantages, which are certain, for future benefits I cannot hope to partake?" The European factors were obliged therefore to remain at Skanderoon.

robn. There are three of these factors, two for the French, and one for the English and Venetians. The only curiosity which they have to amuse strangers with consists in six or seven marble monuments, sent from England, on which you read: *Here lies such a one, carried off in the flower of his age, by the fatal effects of a contagious air.* The sight of these is the more distressing, as the languid air, yellow complexion, livid eyes, and dropical bellies of those who shew them, make it but too probable they cannot long escape the same fate. It is true, they have some resource in the village of Bailan, the pure air and excellent waters of which surprizingly restore the sick: This village, situated among the mountains, three leagues from Alexandretta, on the road to Aleppo, presents the most picturesque appearance. It is built among precipices in a narrow and deep valley, from whence the Gulph of Skandaroon is seen as through a tube. The houses, built against the steep declivities of the two mountains, are so disposed, that the terraces of the lower serve as streets and courts to those above. In winter, cascades pour down on every side, which stun the

inhabitants with their noise, and, in their fall, sometimes, rend off large pieces of the rocks, and even throw down the houses. The cold is very severe there, during that season, but the summer delightful; the inhabitants, who speak only Turkish, live on their goats and buffaloes, and the produce of a few gardens which they cultivate. The Aga, for some years past, has applied the duties of the custom-house of Alexandretta to his own use, and rendered himself almost independent of the Pacha of Aleppo. The Turkish empire is full of such rebels, who frequently die in peaceable possession of their usurpations.

On the road from Alexandretta to Aleppo, at the last place travellers sleep at, is the village of Martawan, celebrated among the Turks and Europeans, on account of an extraordinary practice of the inhabitants, who let out their wives and daughters for a trifling sum (*i*). This prostitution, held in abhorrence by the Arabs, seems to me to have

(*i*) See Baron de Tott's Memoirs. M. du Rocher, now resident of the king of France with the Emperor of Morocco, has furnished me with many entertaining anecdotes respecting this whimsical custom, but too indelicate for the press. T.

originated

originated in some religious custom, which ought perhaps to be sought for in the ancient worship of the goddess Venus, or to be attributed to the community of women permitted by the Ansarians, to which tribe the inhabitants of Martawan belong. The Franks pretend that the women are pretty; but it is probable that long abstinence at sea, and the vanity of intrigue, constitute all their merit; for their exterior announces nothing but the disgusting uncleanness of misery.

In the mountains which terminate the Pachalic of Aleppo to the north, we find Kles and Aentah, two considerable villages. They are inhabited by Armenian Christians, Curds, and Mahometans, who, notwithstanding the difference of their religions, live in friendship, and, by their union, are enabled to resist the Pacha, whom they often brave, and enjoy in tranquillity the produce of their flocks, bees, and a few cultivated spots on which they grow corn and tobacco (*k*).

(*k*) These towns successfully revolted in 1780, against the tyranny of the Second Abdi Pacha, mentioned by our author. T.

Two days journey to the north-east of Aleppo is the town of Mambedj, so celebrated in ancient times, under the names of Bambyce, and Hierapolis (1). No traces remain of the temple of that great goddess with whose worship Lucian has made us acquainted. The only remarkable monument is a subterraneous canal, which conducts the water from the mountains of the north for the distance of four leagues. All this country was formerly full of such aqueducts: the Assyrians, Medes, and Persians, esteemed it a religious duty to convey the water to the desert, in order to multiply, according to the precepts of Zoroaster, *the principles of life and of abundance*: we therefore, at every step, meet with astonishing proofs of ancient population. Along the whole road from Aleppo to Hama, we discover the ruins of ancient villages, cisterns fallen in, and the remains of fortresses, nay even of temples. I particularly remarked a quantity of oval and round hillocks, which from the nature of the earth, and their steep ascent on this

(1) The name of Hierapolis still subsists in that of another village, callen *Yeraboles*, and situated on the Euphrates.

even

even plain, evidently appear to have been the work of man. The reader may form some idea of the labour they must have cost from the dimensions of that of Kan-Shaikoun, which I found to be seven hundred and twenty paces, or fourteen hundred French feet in circumference, and near a hundred feet high. These hillocks, scattered at regular intervals of nearly a league from each other, are covered with the ruins of citadels, and, probably, were also places sacred to the adoration of some deity, according to the well known practice of the ancients, of worshipping "on high places." These conjectures seem confirmed by the tradition of the inhabitants, who attribute all these works to the infidels. At present, instead of that cultivation which might be expected, we meet with nothing but waste and desolated lands: yet the soil is of a good quality, and the small quantity of grain, cotton, and sesamum it produces is excellent. But all the frontiers of the Desert are destitute of springs and running water. That of the wells is brackish; and the winter rains, on which the inhabitants place their principal dependance, sometimes fail. For this reason, nothing can be conceived more

M 3 melancholy

melancholy than these parched and dusty plains, without trees, and without verdure; or more miserable than the appearance of the straw and earthen huts which form their villages; nor can any greater wretchedness be imagined than that of the peasants, exposed at once to the oppression of the Turks, and the robberies of the Bedouin Arabs. The tribes which encamp in these plains are called the Mawalis; they are the most powerful, and the richest among the Arabs, as they pay some attention to agriculture, and partake in the trade of the caravans which go from Aleppo, either to Bassora or Damascus, or to Tripoli by the way of Hama.

C H A P.

C H A P. XXVIII.

Of the Pachalic of Tripoli.

THE Pachalic of Tripoli comprehends the country which stretches along the Mediterranean, from Latakia to the Narh-el-Kelb, and is bounded on the west by that torrent, and the chain of mountains which overlook the Orontes.

The principal part of this government is hilly; the sea-coast alone, between Tripoli and Latakia, is a level country. The numerous rivulets which water it contribute greatly to its fertility; but notwithstanding this advantage, this plain is much less cultivated than the mountains, without even excepting Lebanon, with its numerous rocks and pine-trees. Its chief productions are corn, barley, and cotton. In the territory of Latakia tobacco and olives are principally cultivated; but in Lebanon, and the Kefraouan, white mulberry-trees and vineyards.

This Pachalic contains several different tribes and religions. From Lebanon to above

M 4

Latakia,

Latakia, the mountains are peopled by the Ansfarians of whom I have before spoken; Lebanon and the Kefraouan are inhabited entirely by the Maronites, and the sea-coast and cities, by Schismatic Greeks, and Latins, Turks, and descendants of the Arabs.

The Pacha of Tripoli enjoys all the privileges of his place. The military and finances are in his hands; he holds the government in quality of a farm from the Porte, on a lease of one year only, at the annual rent of seven hundred and fifty purses, (thirty nine thousand pounds); besides this, he is obliged to supply the Caravan of Mecca with corn, barley, rice, and other provisions, the expences of which are estimated at seven hundred and fifty purses more. He is himself obliged to conduct this convoy into the Desert, to meet the pilgrims. To indemnify him for these expences he receives the Miri, the customs, the farms of the Ansfarians and the Kefraouan, and adds to all these numerous annual extortions and exactions; indeed had he no more than this last article, his profits would be considerable. He maintains about five hundred cavalry, as ill provided

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as those of Aleppo, and a few Mogradian infantry.

The Pacha of Tripoli has always been desirous of personally governing the country of the Ansarians, and the Maronites; but these people having invariably opposed by force the entrance of the Turks into their mountains, he has been constrained to abandon the collection of the tribute to under farmers, approved of by the inhabitants. Their office is not, like his, held only for a year, but is disposed of by auction; whence arises a competition of wealthy persons, who perpetually afford him the means of exciting or fomenting troubles in the tributary nation: this administration is the same we find in history to have been usual with the ancient Persians and Assyrians, and appears to have been frequent in all ages in the eastern world.

The farm of the Ansarians is at this day divided between three chiefs or *Mokaddamin*; that of the Maronites is wholly in the hands of the Emir Yousef, who pays thirty purses (fifteen hundred and sixty pounds) for it. Among the remarkable places in this Pachalic we must first mention
Tripoli,

Tripoli (*m*), in Arabic *Tarabolos*, the residence of the Pacha. It is situated on the river Kadisha, at the distance of a quarter of a league from its mouth, and precisely at the foot of Mount Lebanon, which overlooks and surrounds it with its branches to the east, the south, and even a little to the north-west. It is separated from the sea by a small triangular plain, half a league in breadth, at the point of which is the village where the vessels land their goods. The Franks call this village *la Marine* (*n*), the general name given by them to these places in the Levant. There is no harbour but a simple road, which extends from the shore to the shoals called *The Rabbit and Pigeon Islands*. The bottom is rocky, and mariners are not fond of remaining here, as the cables are soon worn out, and the vessels exposed to the north-west winds, which are frequent and violent on all this coast. In the time of the Crusades, this

(*m*) A Greek name, signifying *three cities*, it having been built by three colonies, from Sidon, Tyre, and Aradus, who each of them formed settlements so near each other, that they were soon united into one.

(*n*) Such maritime places were by the ancients called *Majumæ*.

road

road was defended by towers, seven of which are still subsisting, from the mouth of the river to the village. They are strong built, but now serve only as a place of resort for birds of prey.

All the environs of Tripoli are laid out in orchards, where the nopal grows spontaneously, and the white mulberry is cultivated for the silk worm; and the pomegranate, the orange, and the lemon tree, for their fruit, which is of the greatest beauty. But these places, though delightful to the eye, are unhealthy. Every year, from July to September, epidemic fevers, like those of Skanderoon and Cyprus, rage here: these are owing to the artificial inundations with which the mulberry trees are watered, in order that they may throw out their second leaves. Besides, as the city is open only to the west, the air does not circulate, and the spirits are in a constant state of oppression, which makes health at best but a kind of convalescence (*o*). The air, though more humid,
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(*o*) Since my return from France, I have received accounts, that, in the spring 1785, there raged an epidemical disorder, which desolated Tripoli and the Kesrouan. It was a violent fever, accompanied with blue spots, which
made

is more salubrious at *la Marine*, doubtless because it has room to circulate. It is still more so in the islands; and were the place in the hand of an enlightened government, the inhabitants should be invited to live there. Nothing more would be necessary to induce them, than to convey water to the village by conduits, as seems formerly to have been done. It is worthy of observation, also, that the southern shore of the small plain is full of the ruins of habitations, and columns broken and buried in the earth, or in the sea sands. The Franks had employed a great number of them in the building their walls, in the remains of which they are still to be seen laid crossways.

The commerce of Tripoli consists almost wholly in different coarse silks, which are made use of for laces. It is observed, that they are every day losing their quality. The reason assigned for which, by well informed

made it suspected to have an affinity with the plague. What may be esteemed singular, is, that it was observed to attack very few Mahometans, but made its chief ravages among the Christians; whence it may be concluded it was, in a great measure, occasioned by the unwholesome food and meagre diet they live on during Lent.

persons,

persons, is, the decay of the mulberry trees, of which scarcely any thing now remains but some hollow trunks. A stranger instantly replies, why not plant new ones? But I answer, that is an European observation. Here they never plant; because, were they to build or plant, the Pacha would say, this man has money; he would send for him, and demand it of him: should he deny that he has any, he must suffer the bastinado; and should he confess, must still receive it to extort from him the acknowledgment that he has still more. Not that the Tripolitans are remarkable for their patience; they are, on the contrary, considered as extremely mutinous. Their title of Janisaries, and the green turban they wear, in quality of *Sherifs*, inspire them with the spirit of revolt. Ten or twelve years ago, the extortions of a Pacha drove them to extremities; they expelled him, and remained eight months independent; but the Porte sent a man well versed in her maxims, who, by dint of promises, oaths, and pardons, gained and dispersed them, and concluded by putting to death eight hundred in one day, whose heads are still to be seen in a cave near Kadisha. Such is the government of the Turks!

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The commerce of Tripoli is in the hands of the French alone. They have a consul here, and three commercial houses. They export silks, and sponges fished up in the road; these they exchange for cloths, cochineal, sugar, and West India coffee; but this factory, both with respect to imports and exports, is inferior to its subordinate town Latakia.

The town of Latakia, founded by Seleucus Nicator, under the name of *Laodicea*, is situated at the base, and on the southern side of a small peninsula, which projects half a league into the sea. Its port, like all the others on this coast, is a sort of basin, environed by a mole, the entrance of which is very narrow. It might contain five and twenty or thirty vessels; but the Turks have suffered it so to be choaked up, as scarcely to admit four. Ships of above four hundred tons cannot ride there; and hardly a year passes, that one is not stranded in the entrance. Notwithstanding this, Latakia carries on a very great commerce, consisting chiefly of tobacco, of which upwards of twenty cargoes are annually sent to Damietta: the returns from thence are rice, which is bartered in Upper Syria

Syria for oils and cottons. In the time of Strabo, instead of tobacco, the exports consisted in its famous wines, the produce of the hill sides. Even then, Egypt was the market by way of Alexandria. Have the ancients or the moderns gained by this exchange? Neither Latakia nor Tripoli can be mentioned as places of strength; they have neither cannon nor soldiers; a single privateer would make a conquest of them both. They are each supposed to contain from four to five thousand inhabitants.

On the coast, between these towns, we meet with several inhabited villages, which formerly were large cities: such are Djebila, Merkab, situated on a steep declivity, and Tartousa; but we find still more places which have only the half-destroyed remains of ancient habitations. Among the latter, one of the principal is the rock, or island of Rouad, formerly a powerful city and republic, known by the name of *Aradus*. Not a single wall is remaining of all that multitude of houses, which, according to Strabo, were built with more stories than even those of Rome. The liberty enjoyed by the inhabitants had rendered it very populous, and it subsisted

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by

by naval commerce, manufactures, and arts. At present the island is deserted; nor has tradition even retained the memory of a spring of fresh water in its environs, which the people of Aradus discovered at the bottom of the sea, and from which they drew water, in time of war, by means of a leaden bell, and a leathern pipe fitted to its bottom.

To the south of Tripoli is the country of the Kefraouan, which extends from Nahr-el-ikelb, passing by Lebanon, as far as Tripoli. Djebail, the ancient Byblos, is the most considerable town in this territory: it has not, however, above six thousand inhabitants. Its ancient port, which resembles that of Latakia, is in a still worse situation; scarcely any traces of it remain. The river Ibrahim, the ancient *Adonis*, which is two leagues to the southward, has the only bridge to be seen, that of Tripoli excepted, from thence to Antioch. It is of a single arch, fifty feet wide, and upwards of thirty high; of a very light architecture, and appears to have been a work of the Arabs.

Among the mountains, the places most frequented by the Europeans, are the villages of Eden and Besharrai, where the missionaries have

have a house. During the winter, many of the inhabitants leave their houses under the snow, with somebody to guard them, and remove to the sea-coast. Besharrai is in the road to the Cedars, to which it is a journey of seven hours, though the distance be but three leagues. These Cedars, so boasted, resemble many other wonders; they support their reputation very indifferently on a near inspection; the sight of four or five large trees, which are all that remain, and have nothing remarkable in their appearance; is not worth the trouble it costs the traveller to climb the precipices that lead to them.

On the frontiers of the Kefraouan, a league to the northward of Nahr-el-kelb, is the little village of Antoura, where the Jesuits were established in a house, which, though it has not the splendor of those in Europe, is a neat and simple mansion. Its situation on the side of the hill, the limpid waters which refresh its vineyards and mulberry trees, the prospect it commands over the valley, and the distant view it has of the sea, render it a most agreeable hermitage. The Jesuits attempted to annex to it a convent of nuns, situated at a quarter of a league's distance in front;

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but the Greek Christians having dispossessed them, they built one close to them, under the name of the *Visitation*. They had also built, two hundred paces higher, a seminary, which they wished to fill with Maronite and Latin-Greek students; but it has remained deserted. The Lazarites, who have succeeded them, maintain a superior curate, and a lay-brother at Antoura, who do the duties of the mission with equal charity, politeness, and decency,

C H A P. XXIX.

*Of the Pachalic of Saide, called likewise the
Pachalic of Acre.*

TO the south of the Pachalic of Tripoli, and on the same coast, is a third Pachalic, that, till now, has borne the name of the city of Saide, its capital, but may henceforward assume that of Acre, to which place the Pacha had of late years transferred his residence. The extent of this government has greatly varied at different times. Before Shaik Daher, it included the country of the Druzes, and the whole coast from Nahr-el-kelb, as far as Mount Carmel. In proportion as Daher obtained power, he infringed on the territories of the Pacha, and reduced him to the city of Saide, from which he was at last expelled; but after the ruin of Daher, the government resumed its ancient limits. Djezzar, who succeeded that chief in quality of Pacha for the Turks, has annexed to the Pachalic the countries of Safad, Tabaria, and Balbec, formerly tributary to Damascus, and the territory of Kaifaria, (the ancient Cesa-

rea) inhabited by the Arabs of Saker. This Pacha, perceiving the advantage of the works erected by Daher at Acre, transferred his residence to that city, which is now become the capital of the province.

By these different augmentations, the Pachalic of Acre at present includes all the country from the Nahr-el-keleb, to the south of Kaifaria, between the Mediterranean to the west, and at Anti-Lebanon, and the upper part of the course of the Jordan, to the east. It derives the more importance from this extent, as it unites the valuable advantages of situation and soil. The plains of Acre, Esdrelon, Sour, Havula, and the Lower Bekaa, are justly boasted for their fertility. Corn, barley, maize, cotton, and sesamum, produce, notwithstanding the imperfection of the culture, twenty and twenty-five for one. The country of Kaifaria possesses a forest of oaks, the only one in Syria. Safad furnishes cottons, which, from their whiteness, are held in as high estimation as those of Cyprus. The neighbouring mountains of Sour produce as good tobacco as that of Latakia, and in a part of them is made a perfume of cloves, which

which is reserved exclusively for the use of the Sultan and his women. The country of the Druzes abounds in wines and silks; in short, from the situation of the coast, and the number of its creeks, this Pachalic necessarily becomes the emporium of Damascus and all the interior parts of Syria.

The Pacha enjoys all the privileges, and receives all the emoluments of his office; he is despotic governor, and farmer general. He remits to the Porte annually the fixed sum of seven hundred and fifty purses; but he, as well as the Pacha of Tripoli, is obliged to furnish the *Djerde* or provisions for the pilgrims of Mecca. His expences for this article are estimated likewise at seven hundred and fifty purses, in rice, corn, barley, &c. The time limited for his government is a year, but this is frequently prolonged. His revenues are, the Miri; the farms of the tributaries, as the Druzes, the Motoualis, and some Arab tribes; the numerous fees from successions and extortions; and the produce of the customs on the exports, imports, and the conveyance of merchandize; which article alone amounted to one thousand purses (above fifty thousand pounds), when Djezzar farmed all the har-

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hours and creeks in 1784. This Pacha likewise, as is usual with the Turkish governors in Asia, cultivates lands on his own account, enters into partnership with merchants and manufacturers, and lends out money for interest to husbandmen and traders. The total, from these various emoluments, is estimated at between nine and ten millions of French money, (about four hundred thousand pounds). If we compare with this his tribute, which, with the supply of the caravan, amounts only to fifteen hundred purses, or one million, eight hundred and seventy-five thousand livres, (seventy-eight thousand one hundred and twenty-five pounds), we must be astonished that the Porte allows him such enormous profits; but this also is a part of the policy of the Divan. The tribute once settled never varies; only, if the Pacha becomes rich, he is squeezed by extraordinary demands. He is often left to accumulate in peace; but when he has once amassed great wealth, some expedient is always contrived to bring to Constantinople his coffers or his head.

At present, the Porte is on good terms with Djezzar, on account, it is said, of his former services; in fact, he greatly contributed to the

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the ruin of Daher. He destroyed the family of that prince, restrained the Bedouins of Saker, humbled the Druzes, and nearly annihilated the Motoualis. These successes have caused him to be continued in his government for ten years. He has lately received the three tails, and the title of *Wazir* (Visir), which accompanies them (*p*); but the Porte, as usual, begins to take umbrage at his good fortune. She is alarmed at his enterprising spirit; and he, on his side, is apprehensive of the duplicity of the Divan: so that a mutual distrust prevails, from which some important consequences may well be expected. He maintains a greater number of soldiers, and in better condition, than any other Pacha, and takes care to enroll none but those of his own country; that is to say, Bosniaks and Arnauts; their number is about nine hundred horsemen. Added to these, he has nine thousand Mograbian infantry. The gates of his frontier towns have regular guards, which is usual in the rest of Syria.

By sea, he has one frigate, two galiots, and a xebeck, which he has lately taken from

(*p*) Every Pacha of three tails is styled *Visir*.

the Maltese. By these precautions, apparently intended to secure him from foreign enemies, he has put himself on his guard against the stratagems of the Divan. More than one attempt has been made to destroy him by Capidjis; but he has watched them so narrowly, that they have not been able to effect any thing; and the *cholera*, of which two or three of them have suddenly died, has cooled the zeal of those who take upon them so ticklish an employment. Besides, he constantly maintains spies in pay, in the *Serai*, or palace of the Sultan; and his money procures him a numerous party ever ready to defend his conduct. By these means he has just obtained the Pachalic of Damascus, to which he had long aspired, and which is, in fact, the most important in all Syria. He has resigned that of Acre to a Mamlouk, named Selim, his friend, and the companion of his fortune; but this man is so devoted to him, that Djezzar may be considered as in possession of both the governments. It is said, he is soliciting that of Aleppo; which if he procures, he will possess nearly the whole of Syria, and the Porte possibly may find in him a rebel more dangerous than Daher; but, as conjectures concerning such events

events are of little use, I shall pass, without pursuing them any further, to give some description of the most remarkable places in this Pachalic (*q*).

The first that presents itself, as we proceed along the coast, is the town of Berytus, which the Arabs pronounce *Bairout* (*r*), like the ancient Greeks. It is situated in a plain, which, from the foot of Lebanon, runs out into the sea, narrowing to a point, about two leagues from the ordinary line of the shore, and on the north side forms a pretty long road, which receives the river of Nahr-el-Salib, called also Nahr-Bairout. This river is liable to such frequent floods in winter, as to have occasioned the building of a considerable bridge: but it is in so ruinous a state as to be impassable. The bottom of the road is rock, which chafes the cables, and renders it very insecure. From hence, as we proceed west-

(*q*) It is asserted on good authority, that Djazzar, dreading a visit from his *old friend*, the *Captain Pacha*, now employed in quelling the revolt in Egypt, has quitted his government, and prudently fled with all his ill-gotten wealth, it is supposed, into Bosnia, his native country, at the commencement of the year 1787. T.

(*r*) This is in fact the true pronunciation of the Greek word Βερυτ.

ward

ward towards the point, we reach, after an hour's journey, the town of Bairout. This, till lately, belonged to the Druzes; but Djezzar thought proper, as we have seen, to take it from them, and place in it a Turkish garrison. It still continues, however, to be the emporium of the Maronites and the Druzes, where they export their cottons and silks, almost all of which are sent to Cairo. In return, they receive rice, tobacco, coffee, and specie, which they exchange again for the corn of the Bekaa, and the Hauran. This commerce maintains near six thousand persons. The dialect of the inhabitants is justly censured as the most corrupt of any in the country; it unites in itself the twelve faults enumerated by the Arabian grammarians.

The port of Bairout, formed like all the others on the coast, by a pier, is, like them, choaked up with sands and ruins. The town is surrounded by a wall, the soft and sandy stone of which may be pierced by a cannon ball, without breaking or crumbling; which was unfavourable to the Russians in their attack; but in other respects this wall, and its old towers, are defenceless. Two in-

conveniences will prevent Bairout from ever becoming a place of strength; for it is commanded by a chain of hills to the south-east, and is intirely destitute of water, which the women are obliged to fetch from a well at the distance of half a quarter of a league, though what they find there is but indifferent. Djezzar has undertaken to construct a public fountain, as he has done at Acre; but the canal which I saw dug, will soon become usefess. By digging, in order to form reservoirs, subterraneous ruins have been discovered, from which it appears, that the modern town is built on the ancient one. The same may be observed of Latakia, Antioch, Tripoli, Saide, and the greater part of the towns on the coast, which has been occasioned by earthquakes, that have destroyed them at different periods. We find likewise, without the walls, to the west, heaps of rubbish, and some shafts of columns, which indicate that Bairout has been formerly much larger than at present. The plain around it is entirely planted with white mulberry trees, which, unlike those of Tripoli, are young and flourishing; because, in the territories of the Druzes, there is no danger in renewing them.

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The silk, therefore, produced here, is of the very finest quality. As we descend from the mountains, no prospect can be more delightful than to behold, from their summits or declivities, the rich carpet of verdure, formed by the tops of these useful trees in the distant bottom of the valley.

In summer, it is inconvenient to reside at Bairout, on account of the heat, and the warmth of the water; the town, however, is not unhealthy, though it is said to have been so formerly. It has ceased to be so since the Emir Fakr-el-din planted a wood of fir trees, which are still standing, a league to the southward of the town. The monks of Mahr-Hanna, who are not systematical philosophers, have made the same observation respecting several convents; they even assert, that since the heights have been covered with pines, the waters of several springs have become more abundant, and more salubrious; which agrees with other known facts (s).

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(s) Dr. Franklin, to whom mankind are indebted for so much, in every branch of knowledge, has given very satisfactory reasons for this salutary effect of trees, particularly pines; the subject has been well treated too by several

English

The country of the Druzes affords few interesting places. The most remarkable is *Dair-el-Kamar*, or the House of the Moon, which is the capital and residence of the Emirs. It is not a city, but a large town ill built, and very dirty. It is situated on the back of a mountain, at the foot of which flows one of the branches of the ancient river Tamras, at present the rivulet of Damour. It is inhabited by Greek Catholics and Schismatics, Maronites and Druzes, to the number of fifteen or eighteen hundred. The *Serai*, or palace of the prince, is only a large wretched house falling to ruin.

I must also mention Zahla, a village at the foot of the mountains in the valley of *Bekaa*. During the last twenty years this place is become the centre of correspondence between Balbec, Damascus, Bairout, and the interior of the Mountains. It is even said that counterfeit money is made here; but the clumsy artists, though they can imitate the Turkish piasters, have not been able to approach the workmanship of the German Dollars.

English and French philosophers; among others, by the *Marquis de Chastellux*, in his *Travels in North America*, under the article *Virginia*. T,

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I neglected to observe that the country of the Druzes is divided into *Katas*, sections, or districts, which have each of them a distinct character. The *Matra*, which is to the north, is the most stony, and abounds most in iron. The *Garb* affords the most beautiful pines. The *Sabel*, or *flat* Country, which lies next the sea, produces mulberry-trees and vineyards. The *Shouf*, in which Dair-el-Kamar is situated, contains the greatest number of Okkals, and produces the finest silks. The *Tefah*, or district of Apples, which is to the south, abounds in that species of fruit. The *Shakif* grows the best tobacco, and the name of *Djourd* is given to all the higher country and the coldest of the mountains: to this district in summer the shepherds retire with their flocks.

I have already said that the Druzes had received among them the Greek Christians and Maronites, and granted them lands to build convents on. The Greek Catholics, availing themselves of this permission, have founded twelve within the last seventy years. The principal of these is Mar-Hanna. This monastery is situated opposite the village of Shouair, on a steep declivity, at the bottom of which

which a torrent runs in winter into the Nahr-el-kelb. The convent built amid rocks and blocks of stone is far from magnificent, and consists of a dormitory with two rows of little cells, above which is a terrace substantially vaulted; it maintains forty monks. Its chief merit consists in an Arabic Printing-Press, the only one which has succeeded in the Turkish empire. This has been established about fifty years, and the reader will perhaps not be offended if I say something of its history.

At the commencement of the present century, the Jesuits, profiting by the respect which the protection of France procured them, manifested, in their house at Aleppo, that zeal for the improvement of knowledge which they have every where shewn. They had founded a school in that city, intended to educate the children of Christians in the doctrines of the Catholic religion, and enable them to confute heretics, which is always a principal object with the missionaries; whence results a rage for controversy, which causes perpetual differences among the partisans of the various sects in the east. The Latins of Aleppo, excited by the

the Jesuits, presently recommenced as heretofore, their disputations with the Greeks; but as logic requires a methodical acquaintance with language, and the Christians, excluded from the Mahometan-schools, knew nothing but the vulgar Arabic, they were unable to indulge their passion for controversy in writing. To remedy this, the Latins determined to study the Arabic language grammatically. The pride of the Mahometan Doctors at first refused to lay open their learning to the *Infidels*, but, their avarice overpowered their scruples; and, for a few purses, this so much boasted science of grammar, and *the Nabou*, was introduced among the Christians. The student who distinguished himself most by his progress was named Abd-allah-Zaker, who to his own desire of learning, added an ardent zeal to promulgate his knowledge and his opinions. It is impossible to determine to what length this spirit of making proselytes might have been carried, at Aleppo; had not an accident, not unusual in Turkey, disturbed its progress. The Schismatics, vexed at the attacks of Abd-allah, endeavoured to procure his ruin at Constantinople. The Patriarch, excited by the

the priests, represented him to the Visir as a dangerous man; the Visir, accustomed to these disputes, feigned to pay no attention to his complaint; but the patriarch, backing his reasons with a few purses, the Visir delivered him a *Kat-sherif*, or warrant of the Sultan, which, according to custom, contained an order to cut off Abd-allah's head. Fortunately he received timely warning, and escaped into Lebanon, where his life was in safety: but in quitting his country, he by no means abandoned his ideas of reformation, and was more resolutely bent than ever on propagating his opinions. This he was only able to effect by writings; and manuscripts seemed to him an inadequate method. He was no stranger to the advantages of the press, and had the courage to form the three-fold project of writing, founding types, and printing; he succeeded in this enterprize from the natural goodness of his understanding, and the knowledge he had of the art of engraving, which he had already practised in his profession as a jeweller. He stood in need of an associate, and was lucky enough to find one who entered into his designs. His brother, who was Superior at Mar-Hanna, prevailed on

him to make that convent his residence, and from that time, abandoning every other care, he gave himself up entirely to the execution of his project. His zeal and industry had such success, that in the year 1733, he published the Psalms of David in one volume. His characters were found so correct and beautiful, that even his enemies purchased his book; and since that period there have been ten impressions of it; new characters have been founded, but nothing has been executed superior to his. They perfectly imitate handwriting; they express the full and the fine letters, and have not the meagre and straggling appearance of the Arabic characters of Europe. He passed twenty years in this manner, printing different works, which, in general, were translations of our books of devotion. Not that he was acquainted with any of the European languages, but the Jesuits had already translated several books, and as their Arabic was extremely bad, he corrected their translations, and often substituted his own version, which is a model of purity and elegance. The Arabic he wrote was remarkable for a clear, precise, and harmonious style, of which that language had been
thought

thought incapable, and which proves that, should it ever be cultivated by a learned people, it will become one of the most copious and expressive in the world. After the death of Abd-allah, which happened about 1755, he was succeeded by his pupil; and his successors were the religious of the house; they have continued to found letters and to print, but the business is at present on the decline, and seems likely to be soon entirely laid aside. The books have but little sale, except the Psalter, which is the classic of the Christian children, and for which there is a continual demand. The expences are considerable, as the paper comes from Europe, and the labour is very slow. A little art would remedy the first inconvenience, but the latter is radical. The Arabic characters requiring to be connected together, to join them well and place them in a right line requires an immense and minute attention. Besides this, the combination of the letters varying according as they occur, at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of a word, it is necessary to found a great number of double letters; by which means the cases being too multiplied, are not collected under

the hand of a compositor; but he is obliged to run the whole length of a table eighteen feet long, and seek for his letters in near nine hundred divisions: hence a loss of time which will never allow Arabic Presses to attain the perfection of ours. As for the inconsiderable sale of the books, this must be attributed to the bad choice they have made of them. Instead of giving versions of works of real utility, calculated to awaken a taste for the arts indiscriminately among all the Arabs, they have only translated mystic books peculiar to the Christians, which, by their misanthropic morality, are formed to excite a disgust for all science, and even for life itself. Of this the reader will judge from the following Catalogue:

CATALOGUE *of the Books printed at the Convent of MAR-HANNA-EL-SHOUAIR, in the mountains of the Druzes.*

1. **T**HE balance of Time, or the Difference between Time and Eternity, by Father Nierenberg, Jesuit.

1. Mizân-el-Zaman.

2. The

2. The Vanity of the World, by Didaco Stella, Jesuit.

3. The Sinner's Guide, by Louis de Grenade, Jesuit.

4. The Priest's Guide.

5. The Christian's Guide.

6. The Food of the Soul.

7. The Contemplation of Passion Week.

8. Christian Doctrine.

9. Exposition of the Seven Penitential Psalms.

10. The Psalms of David, *translated from the Greek*.

11. The Prophecies.

12. The Gospel and Epistles.

13. Hourly prayers (*Les Heures Chretiennes*); to which is added, the Christian Perfection of Rodriguez, and the Rules of the Monks; *both printed at Rome*.

2. Abatil-el-Aalam. 3. Morshed-el-Kati. 4. Morshed-el-Kahen. 5. Morshed-el-Masfihi. 6. Koutel Nafs. 7. Taammol-el-Afboua. 8. Taalim-el-Masfihi. 9. Taffir-el-Sabat. 10. El Mazamir. 11. El Onbouat. 12. El-Endjil wa el Rafayel. 13. El-Soueyat.

In Manuscripts this Convent possesses;

1. The Imitation of Jesus Christ.
2. The Garden of the Monks, or life of the Holy Fathers of the Desert.
3. Moral Theology of Buzembaum.
4. The Sermons of Segneri.
5. Theology of St. Thomas, in 4 vol. *folio*, the copying of which cost one thousand two hundred and fifty livres (52*l.*).
6. Sermons of St. John Chrysostom.
7. Principles of Laws, by Claude Viretieu.
8. * Theological disputes of the Monk George.
9. Logic, translated from the Italian, by a Maronite.
10. * The Light of Hearts, by Paul of Smyrna, a converted Jew.
11. * Questions and Enquiries concerning Grammar, and *the Nabou*, by Bishop Germain, Maronite.

1. Taklid-el-Masib. 2. Bestan el Rohoban. 3. Elm el Nia l'Bouzembaoum. 4. Maouacz Sainari. 5. Lahout Mar Toume. 6. Mawaez Fomm el Dahab. 7. Kawaed el Naouamis l'Kloud Firtiou. 8. Madjadalet el Anba Djordji. 9. El Mantek. 10. Nour el. Aebab. 11. El Mataleb wa el Mebahes.

12. * Poems

12. * Poems of the same, on pious subjects.

13. * Poems of the Curate Nicholas, brother of Abdallah Zaker.

14. * Abridgment of the Arabic Dictionary, called *the Ocean*,

N. B. *All these are the productions of Christians; those marked with a star * were originally written in Arabic: the following are Mahometan works,*

1. The Koran.

2. The *Ocean* of the Arabic Tongue, translated by Golius.

3. The Thousand Distichs of Ebn-el-Malek on Grammar.

4. Explication of the Thousand Distichs.

5. Grammar of Adjeroumia.

6. Rhetoric of Taftazani.

7. Sessions, or Pleasant Stories of Hariri.

8. Poems of Omar-ebn-el-Fardi, of the amorous kind.

12. Diwan Djermanos. 13. Diwan Ankoula. 14. Mokatafar el Kamous.—1. Koran. 2. El Kamous l'Firowz-abad. 3. El Alf bait l'Ebn-el-malek. 4. Tafsir el-alf-bait. 5. El-Adjiroumia. 6. Elm el Bayan l'Taftazani. 7. Makamat el Hariri. 8. Diwan omar Ebn el fardi.

O 4

9. Science.

9. Science of the Arabic Tongue; a small book in the nature of the *Synonymes Français*, of Abbé Girard.

10. Medicine of Ebn-Sina, (Avicenna).

11. Simples and Drugs, translated from Dioscorides, by Ebn-el-Bitar.

12. Dispute of the Physicians.

13. Theological Fragments on the different Sects of the World.

14. A little Book of Tales (of little value) from which I have an extract.

15. History of the Jews, by Josephus, a very incorrect translation.

A small book of Astronomy, on the principles of Ptolemy, and some others of no value.

This is all the library of the convent of Mar-Hanna, from which we may form an idea of the literature of Syria, since, excepting one possessed by Djazzar, there does not exist another. Among the original books, there is not one, which, in fact, merits a

9. Fakan el Logat. 10. El tob l'Ebn sina. 11. El Mofradat. 12. Daouat el Otobba. 13. Abarat el Mota-kallamin. 14. Nadim el wahid. 15. Tarik el Yhoud, l'Yousefous.

translation.

translation. Even the *Sessions* of *Hariri*, are only interesting from their style, and, in the whole order, there is but one monk who understands them, nor are the others found much more intelligible by his brethren in general. In the administration of this house, and the manners of the religious who inhabit it, we find some singularities which deserve our notice.

Their order is that of Saint Basil, who is to the Orientals what Saint Benedict is to the western Christians, except that they have adopted a few alterations in consequence of their peculiar situation, and the court of Rome has given her sanction to the code they drew up thirty years ago. They may pronounce the vows at the age of sixteen, for it has ever been the aim of all monastic legislators to captivate the minds of their proselytes at an early age, that they may more implicitly comply with their institutions. These vows are, as every where else, vows of poverty, obedience, devotion to the order, and chastity; and it must be allowed, that they are more strictly observed in this country than in Europe. The condition of the oriental Monks is infinitely more hard than that

that of the European. We may judge of this from the following description of their domestic life. Every day they have seven hours prayers at church, from which no person is exempted. They rise at four in the morning, go to bed at nine in the evening, and make only two meals, viz. at nine and five. They live perpetually on meagre diet, and hardly allow themselves flesh meat in the most critical disorders. Like the other Greeks, they have three Lents a year, and a multitude of fasts, during which they neither eat eggs, nor milk, nor butter, nor even cheese. Almost the whole year they live on lentils and beans with oil, rice and butter, curds, olives, and a little salt fish. Their bread is a little coarse loaf, badly leavened, which serves two days, and is fresh made only once a week. With this food, they pretend to be less subject to maladies than the peasants; but it must be remarked, that they have all issues in their arms, and many of them are attacked by Hernias, owing, as I imagine, to their immoderate use of oil. The lodging of each is a narrow cell, and his whole furniture consists in a mat, a matras, and a blanket; but no sheets, for of these they have no need, as they

they sleep with their cloaths on. Their cloathing is a coarse cotton shirt striped with blue, a pair of drawers, a waistcoat, and a surplice of coarse brown cloth, so stiff and thick, that it will stand upright without a fold. Contrary to the custom of the country, they wear their hair eight inches long, and, instead of a hood, a cylinder of felt, ten inches high, like those of the Turkish cavalry. Every one of them, in short, except the Superior, Purveyor, and Vicar, exercises some trade, either necessary or useful to the house: one is a weaver, and weaves stuffs; another a tailor, and makes cloaths; this is a shoemaker, and makes their shoes; that a mason, and superintends their buildings. Two of them have the management of the kitchen, four work at the printing-press, four are employed in book-binding, and all assist at the bake-house on the day of making bread. The expence of maintaining forty, or five and forty persons, of which the convent consists, does not exceed the annual sum of twelve purses, or six hundred and twenty-five pounds; and from this must be deducted the expences of their hospitality to all passengers, which of itself forms a considerable

able article. It is true, most of these passengers leave presents or alms, which make a part of the revenue of the house; the other part arises from the culture of the lands. They farm a considerable extent of ground, for which they pay four hundred piastras to two Emirs; these lands were cleared out by the first Monks themselves; but at present they commit the culture of them to peasants, who pay them one half of all the produce. This produce consists of white and yellow silks, which are sold at Bairout; some corn and wines (*p*), which, for want of demand, are sent

(*p*) These wines are of three sorts, the red, the white, and the yellow. The white, which are the most rare, are so bitter as to be disagreeable: the two others, on the contrary, are too sweet and sugary. This arises from their being boiled, which makes them resemble the baked wines of Provence. The general custom of the country is, to reduce the must to two thirds of its quantity. It is improper for a common drink at meals, because it ferments in the stomach. In some places, however, they do not boil the red, which then acquires a quality almost equal to that of Bordeaux. The yellow wine is much esteemed among our merchants, under the name of *Golden Wine* (*Vin d'or*), which has been given it from its colour. The most esteemed is produced from the hill sides of the Zouk, or village of Masbeh near Antoura. It is not necessary to heat it, but

sent as presents to their benefactors, or consumed in the house. Formerly, the religious abstained from drinking wine; but, as is customary in all societies, they have gradually relaxed from their primitive austerity: they have also begun to allow the use of tobacco and coffee, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the older Monks, who are ever jealous of too much indulging the habits of youth.

The same regulations are observed in all the houses of the order, which, as I have already said, amount to twelve. The whole number of these religious is estimated at one

but it is too fugary. Such are the wines of Lebanon, so boasted by the Grecian and Roman epicures. The Europeans may try them, and see how far they agree with the ancients in opinion: but they should observe, that the passage by sea ferments boiled wines a second time, and bursts the casks. It is probable, that the inhabitants of Lebanon have made no change in their ancient method of making wines, nor in the culture of their vines. They are disposed on poles of six or eight feet high. They are not pruned as in France, which certainly must greatly injure both the quantity and quality of the crop. The vintage begins about the end of September. The convent of Mar-hanna makes about one hundred and fifty *Rabia*, or earthen jars, containing about one hundred and ten pints each. The price current in the country, is about seven or eight sols, (four pence) the French pint.

hundred

hundred and fifty; to which must be added, five convents of women which depend on them. The first superiors who founded them, thought they had performed a good work; but at present the order repent it has been done, because nuns in a Turkish country are very dangerous, as they are connected with the wealthiest merchants of Aleppo, Damascus, and Cairo, who for a stipulated sum get rid of their daughters by placing them in these convents. The merchants likewise bestow on them considerable alms. Several of them give an hundred pistoles yearly, and even as high as one hundred Louis d'or, or three thousand livres (one hundred and twenty-five pounds), without requiring any other interest than their prayers to God, that he would preserve them from the rapacity of the Pachas. But, as they imprudently attract their notice, by the extreme luxury of their dress and furniture, neither their presents, nor the prayers of the religious, can save them from extortion. Not long since, one of these merchants ventured to build a house at Damascus, which cost him upwards of one hundred and twenty thousand livres, (five thousand pounds). The Pacha observed it, and

and presently gave the owner to understand, he had a curiosity to see his new house, and would pay him a visit, and take a dish of coffee with him. As the Pacha, therefore, might have been so delighted with it, as not to have quitted it again, it became necessary to avoid his politeness, by making him a present of thirty thousand livres, (seven thousand five hundred pounds). £1250—

Next to Mar-Hanna, the most remarkable convent is that of *Dair Mokalles*, or St. Saviour. It is situated three hours journey to the north-east of Saide. The religious had collected there a considerable number of printed Arabic books, and manuscripts: but Djezzar, having carried the war into these districts about eight years ago, his soldiers pillaged the house, and took away all the books.

As we return to the sea-coast, we must first remark Saide, the degenerate offspring of ancient Sidon (*q*). This town, formerly the residence of the Pacha, is, like all the Turkish towns, ill built, dirty, and full of modern

(*q*) The name of Sidon still subsists in a small village half a league from Saide.

ruins,

ruins. Its length along the sea shore is about six hundred paces, and its breadth one hundred and fifty. On the south side, on a small eminence, is a fort built by Degnizla. From hence we have a view of the sea, the city, and the country: but a few cannon would easily destroy this whole work, which is only a large tower of a single story, already half in ruins. At the other extremity of the town, that is, to the north west, is the castle, which is built in the sea itself, eighty paces from the main land, to which it is joined by arches. To the west of this castle is a shoal fifteen feet high above the sea, and about two hundred paces long. The space between this shoal and the castle forms the road, but vessels are not safe there in bad weather. The shoal, which extends along the town, has a bason enclosed by a decayed pier. This was the ancient port; but it is so choaked up by sands, that boats only can enter its mouth, near the castle. Fakr-el-din, Emir of the Druzes, destroyed all these little ports, from Bairout to Acre, by sinking boats and stones to prevent the Turkish ships from entering them. The bason of Saide, if it were cleared out, might contain twenty or twenty-five small vessels.

On the side of the sea, the town is absolutely without any wall; and that which encloses it on the land side is no better than a prison wall. The whole artillery does not exceed six cannon, and these are without carriages or gunners. The garrison scarcely amounts to one hundred men. The water they have comes from the river Aoula, through open canals, from which it is fetched by the women. These canals serve also to water the orchards of mulberry and lemon trees.

Saïde is a considerable trading town, and is the chief emporium of Damascus, and the interior country. The French, who are the only Europeans to be found there, have a consul, and five or six commercial houses. Their exports consist in silks, and particularly in raw and spun cottons. The manufacture of this cotton is the principal art of the inhabitants, the number of whom may be estimated at about five thousand.

Six leagues to the south of Saïde, following the coast, we arrive by a very level plain at the village of Sour. In this name we, with difficulty, recognize that of *Tyre*, which we receive from the Latins; but if we recollect that the *y* was formerly pronounced *ou*; and

observe, that the Latins have substituted the *t* for the *θ* of the Greeks, and that the *θ* had the sound of the English *th*, in the word *think*, we shall be less surpris'd at the alteration. This has not happened among the orientals, who have always called this place *Tfour* and *Sour*.

The name of Tyre recalls to the memory of the historical reader so many great events, and suggests so many reflections, that I think I may be allowed to enter with some minuteness into the description of a place, which was, in ancient times, the theatre of an immense commerce and navigation, the nurse of arts and sciences, and the city of, perhaps, the most industrious and active people the world has yet seen.

Sour is situated on a peninsula, which projects from the shore into the sea, in the form of a mallet with an oval head. This head is a solid rock, covered with a brown cultivable earth, which forms a small plain of about eight hundred paces long, by four hundred broad. The isthmus, which joins this plain to the continent, is of pure sea sand. This difference of soil renders the ancient insular state of the plain, before Alexander joined it
to

to the shore by a mole, very manifest, since it is plain that the sea, by covering this mole with sand, has enlarged it by successive accumulations, and formed the present isthmus. The village of Sour is situated at the junction of this isthmus with the ancient island, of which it does not cover above one third. The point to the north is occupied by a basin, which was a port evidently formed by art, but is at present so choaked up that children pass it without being wet above the middle. The opening at the point is defended by two towers, opposite each other, between which formerly passed a chain fifty or sixty feet long, to shut the harbour. From these towers began a line of walls, which, after surrounding the basin, enclosed the whole island; but at present we can only follow their traces by the foundations which run along the shore, except in the vicinity of the port, where the Motoualis made some repairs twenty years ago, but these are again fallen to decay.

Further on in the sea, to the north-west of the point, at the distance of about three hundred paces, is a ridge of rocks which rise to the surface of the water. The space which separates them from the main land in front,

forms a sort of road, where vessels may anchor with more safety than at Saide; they are not, however, free from danger, for they are exposed to the north-west winds, and the bottom injures the cables. That part of the island which lies between the village and the sea, that is the western side, is open: and this ground the inhabitants have laid out in gardens; but such is their sloth, that they contain far more weeds than useful plants. The south side is sandy, and more covered with rubbish. The whole village contains only fifty or sixty poor families, which live but indifferently on the produce of their little grounds, and a trifling fishery. The houses they occupy are no longer, as in the time of Strabo, edifices of three or four stories high, but wretched huts, ready to crumble to pieces. Formerly they were defenceless towards the land, but the Motoualis, who possessed themselves of this place in 1766, enclosed it with a wall of twenty feet high, which still subsists. The most remarkable building is a ruin at the south-east corner. This was a Christian church, built, probably, by the Crusaders; a part of the choir only is remaining: close to which, amid heaps of stones, lie two beautiful columns, with

with shafts of red granite, of a kind unknown in Syria. Djezzar, who has stripped all this country to ornament his mosque at Acre, wished to carry them away, but his engineers were not able even to move them.

Leaving the village, on the side of the isthmus, at a hundred paces from the gate, we come to a ruined tower, in which is a well, where the women go to fetch water. This well is fifteen or sixteen feet deep; but the depth of the water is not more than two or three feet. Better water is not to be found upon the coast. From some unknown cause, it becomes troubled in September, and continues some days full of a reddish clay. This season is observed as a kind of festival by the inhabitants, who then come in crowds to the well, and pour into it a bucket of sea water, which, according to them, has the virtue of restoring the clearness of the spring. As we proceed along the isthmus, towards the continent, we perceive, at equal distances, the ruins of arcades, which lead in a right line to an eminence, the only one in the plain. This hill is not factitious, like those of the desert; but a natural rock of about one hundred and fifty feet in circumference, by forty or fifty
P 3 high:

high: nothing is to be discovered there but a house in ruins, and the tomb of a Shaik or Santon (*r*), remarkable for the white dome at the top. The distance of this rock from Sour is about a quarter of an hour's walk. As we approach it, the arcades I have mentioned become more numerous, and are not so high; they terminate by a continued line, and, at the foot of the rock, form suddenly a right angle to the south, and proceed obliquely toward the sea: we may follow their direction for above an hour's walk at a horse's pace, till, at length, we distinctly perceive, by the channel on the arches, that this is no other than an aqueduct. This channel is three feet wide, by two and a half deep; and is formed of a cement harder than the stones themselves. At last we arrive at the well where it terminates, or rather from which it begins. This is what some travellers have called the well of Solomon, but, among the inhabitants of the country, it is known only by the name of *Ras-el-aen*, or, Head of

(*r*) Among the Mahometans, the word *Shaik* bears the various significations of *santon*, *hermit*, *idiot* and *madman*. They have the same religious respect for persons disordered in their intellects which we find to have prevailed in the time of David.

the

the Spring. They reckon one principal, two lesser, and several small ones; the whole forming a piece of masonry which is neither of hewn or rough stone, but of cement mixed with sea pebbles. To the south, this stonework rises about eighteen feet from the ground, and fifteen to the northward. On this side is a slope, wide and gradual enough to permit carts to ascend to the top, at which when we arrive we discover what is very surprising; for, instead of finding the water low, or no higher than the ground level, it reaches to the top, that is the column which fills the well, is fifteen feet higher than the ground. Besides this, the water is not calm, but bubbles up with violence, and rushes through channels contrived at the surface of the well. It is so abundant as to drive three mills which are near it, and form a little rivulet before it reaches the sea, which is only four hundred paces distant. The mouth of the principal well is an octagon, each side of which is twenty-three feet three inches, the diameter, therefore, must be sixty-one feet. It has been said that this well has no bottom; but La Roque asserts, that he found it at six and thirty fa-

thom. It is remarkable, that the motion of the water at the surface, has corroded the interior lining of the well, so that its edge rests almost upon nothing, and forms a half arch suspended over the water; among the channels which branch out from it, is a principal one which joins that of the arches I have mentioned: by means of these arches, the water was formerly conveyed to the rock, and from the rock, by the isthmus, to the tower, whence the water was drawn. The circumjacent country is a plain of about two leagues wide, furrounded by a chain of considerably high mountains, which stretch from Kasmia to Cape Blanco. The soil is a black fat earth, on which a small quantity of corn and cotton are successfully cultivated.

Such is the present state of Tyre, which may suggest several observations relative to the situation of that ancient city. We know, that at the time when Nabuchodonosor laid siege to it, Tyre was on the continent; and appears to have stood near *Palæ-Tyrus*, that is, near the well; but, in that case, why was this aqueduct constructed at so much expence (s) from the well to the rock? Will it be alledged it was built after

(s) The piles of the arches are nine feet wide,

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the Tyrians had removed into the island? But prior to the time of Salmanasar, that is, one hundred and thirty-six years before Nabuchodonosor, their annals mention it as already existing. "In the time of Eululæus, king of Tyre," says the historian Menander, as cited by Josephus (*t*), "Salmanasar, king of Assyria, having carried the war into Phœnicia, several towns submitted to his arms: the Tyrians resisted him; but being soon abandoned by Sidon, Acre, and Palæ-Tyrus, which depended on them, they were reduced to their own forces. However, they continued to defend themselves, and Salmanasar, returning to Nineveh, left a part of his army near the rivulets and the aqueduct, to cut off their supply of water. These remained there five years, during which time the Tyrians had no water but what they procured from wells which they dug."

If Palæ-Tyrus was dependant on Tyre, Tyre must have been situated at some distance from it. It was not in the island, since the inhabitants did not remove thither until after Nabuchodonosor. Its original situation must, therefore, have been on the rock. The name of

(*t*) *Antiq. Judaic.* lib. 9. c. 14.

this

this city is a proof of it: for *Tfour*, in Phœnician, signifies rock, and strong hold. On this rock the colony of Sidonians established themselves, when driven from their country, two hundred and forty years before the building of Solomon's Temple. They made choice of this situation, from the double advantage of a place which might be easily defended, and the convenience of the adjacent road, which would contain and cover a great number of vessels. The population of this colony augmenting, in time, and by the advantages of commerce, the Tyrians were in want of more water, and constructed the aqueduct. The industry we find them remarkable for in the days of Solomon, may perhaps induce us to attribute this work to that age. It must, however, be very ancient, since the water of the aqueduct has had time to form, by filtration, a considerable incrustation, which, falling from the sides of the channel, or the inside of the vaults, has obstructed whole arches. In order to secure the aqueduct, it was necessary that a number of inhabitants should settle there, and hence the origin of Palæ-Tyrus. It may be alleged, this is a factitious spring, formed by a subterraneous canal

canal from the mountains; but if so, why was it not conducted directly to the rock? It seems much more probable it is natural; and that they availed themselves of one of those subterranean rivers of which we find many in Syria. The idea of confining this water to force it to rise is worthy of the Phœnicians.

Things were thus situated, when the king of Babylon, conqueror of Jerusalem, determined to destroy the only city which continued to brave his power. The Tyrians resisted him for thirteen years, at the end of which, wearied with endless efforts, they resolved to place the sea between them and their enemy, and passed accordingly into the opposite island, at a quarter of a league's distance. Till this period the island must have contained few inhabitants, on account of the want of water (*u*). Necessity taught them to remedy this inconvenience by cisterns, the remains of which are still to be found in the form of vaulted caves, paved and walled with

(*u*) Josephus is mistaken, when he speaks of Tyre as built in an island in the time of Hiram. In his usual manner he confounds its ancient with its posterior state. See *Antiq. Judaic.* lib. 8. c. 5.

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the utmost care (*x*). Alexander invaded the east, and, to gratify his barbarous pride, Tyre was destroyed, but soon rebuilt; her new inhabitants profited by the mole, by which the Macedonians had made themselves a passage to the island, and continued the aqueduct to the tower, where the water is drawn at this day. But the arches being in many places destroyed, and serviceable in none, how is it that the water is conveyed thither? This must be done by secret conduits contrived in the foundations, and which still continue to bring it from the well. A proof that the water of the tower comes from Ras-el-aen is, that it is troubled in September as at the tower, at which time it is of the same colour, and it has at all times the same taste. These conduits must be very numerous; for though there are several lakes near the tower, yet the well does not cease to supply a considerable quantity of water.

The power of the city of Tyre on the Mediterranean, and in the west, is well known; of this Carthage, Utica, and Cadiz are cele-

(*z*) A considerable one has been lately discovered without the walls, but nothing was found in it, and the *Motfal-lam* ordered it to be shut up.

brated

brated monuments. We know that she extended her navigation even into the ocean, and carried her commerce beyond England to the north, and the Canaries to the south. Her connections with the east, though less known, were not less considerable; the islands of Tyrus, and Aradus, (the modern Bairhain) in the Persian Gulph; the cities of Faran and *Phœnicum Oppidum*, on the Red Sea, in ruins even in the time of the Greeks, prove that the Tyrians had long frequented the coasts of Arabia and the Indian sea; but there exists an historical fragment, which contains descriptions the more valuable, as they present a picture of distant ages, perfectly similar to that of modern times. I shall cite the words of the writer in all their prophetic enthusiasm, only correcting those expressions which have hitherto been misunderstood.

“ Proud city, that art situate at the en-
 “ try of the sea! Tyre, who hast said, My
 “ borders are in the midst of the seas; hearken
 “ to the judgments pronounced against thee!
 “ Thou hast extended thy commerce to (dis-
 “ tant) islands, among the inhabitants of (un-
 “ known) coasts. Thou makest the fir trees
 “ of Sanir (*y*) into ships; the cedars of Le-
 (*y*) Possibly Mount Sannin.

“ bano_n

“ banon are thy masts; the poplars of Bisan
 “ thy oars. Thy sailors are seated upon the
 “ box-wood of Cyprus (z), inlaid with ivory.
 “ Thy sails and streamers are woven with
 “ fine flax from Egypt; thy garments are
 “ dyed with the blue and purple of Hel-
 “ las (a) (the Archipelago). Sidon and
 “ Arvad send thee their rowers; Djabal
 “ (Djebila) her skilful ship-builders; thy
 “ mathematicians and thy sages guide thy
 “ barks; all the ships of the sea are employed
 “ in thy commerce. The Persian, the Ly-
 “ dian, and the Egyptian, receive thy wages :
 “ thy walls are hung round with their buck-
 “ lers, and their cuirasses. The sons of Ar-
 “ vad line thy parapets; and thy towers,
 “ guarded by the Djimedean (a Phœnician
 “ people), glitter with their brilliant qui-

(z) Box of *Katim*. By comparing different passages, we shall be convinced this word does not mean *Greece*, but the Isle of *Cyprus*, and perhaps the coast of *Cilicia*, where the box abounds. It agrees particularly with *Cyprus*, from its analogy with the town of *Kitium*, and the people of the *Kitians*, on whom Eululeus made war in the time of Sal-manasar.

(a) In the *Hebrew* אלישה *Elisba*, which does not differ from *Helles*, the ancient name of the Archipelago, preserved in *Helles-pont*.

“ vers.

“ vers. Every country is desirous of trading
 “ with thee. Tarsus sends to thy markets
 “ iron, tin, and lead. Yonia (*b*), the country
 “ of the Mosques, and Teblis (*c*), supply
 “ thee with slaves, and brazen vessels. Ar-
 “ menia sends thee mules, horses, and horse-
 “ men. The Arab of Dedan (between Alep-
 “ po and Damascus), conveys thy merchant-
 “ dize. Numerous isles exchange with thee
 “ ivory and ebony. The Aramean (the Sy-
 “ rian) (*d*) brings thee rubies, purple, em-
 “ broidered work, fine linen, coral, and agate.
 “ The children of Israel and Judah sell thee
 “ cheese, balm, myrrh, raisins, and oil, and Da-
 “ mascus supplies the wine of Halboun, (per-
 “ haps Halab, where there are still vines), and
 “ fine wool. The Arabs of Oman offer to thy
 “ merchants polished iron, cinnamon, and
 “ the aromatic reed; and the Arabians of

(*b*) *Youn*, pleasantly travestied into *javan*, though the ancients never knew our *j*.

(*c*) *Tobel*, or *Teblis*, is also written *Teflis*, and lies to the north of Armenia, on the frontiers of Georgia. These countries are celebrated among the Greeks for slaves, and for the iron of the *Chalybes*.

(*d*) This name extended to the Cappadocians, and the inhabitants of the Upper Mesopotamia.

“ Dedan

“ Dedan bring thee rich carpets. The in-
 “ habitants of the Desert, and the Shaiks of
 “ Kedar, exchange their lambs and their
 “ goats for thy valuable merchandize. The
 “ Arabs of Saba and Rama (in the Yemen)
 “ enrich thee with aromatics, precious stones,
 “ and gold (*e*). The inhabitants of Haran,
 “ of Kalana, (in Mesopotamia), and of Ada-
 “ na (near to Tarsus), the factors of the
 “ Arabs of Sheba (near the Dedan), the Af-
 “ syrians, and the Chaldeans, trade also
 “ with thee, and sell thee shawls, garments
 “ artfully embroidered, silver, masts, cor-
 “ dage, and cedars; yea, the (boasted) ves-
 “ sels of Tarsus, are in thy pay. O Tyre!
 “ elate with the greatness of thy [glory, and
 “ the immensity of thy riches; the waves of
 “ the sea shall rise up against thee; and the
 “ tempest plunge thee to the bottom of the
 “ waters. Then shall thy wealth be swallow-
 “ ed up with thee; and with thee in one day
 “ shall perish thy commerce, thy merchants
 “ and correspondents, thy sailors, pilots, ar-

(*e*) Thus also, Strabo, *lib.* 16. says that the Sabeans furnished Syria with all the gold that country received, before they were supplanted by the inhabitants of Gerrha, near the mouth of the Euphrates.

“ tists,

“ tists, and soldiers, and the numberless peo-
 “ ple who dwell within thy walls. Thy
 “ rowers shall desert thy vessels. Thy pilots
 “ shall sit upon the shore, looking sorrow-
 “ fully toward the land. The nations whom
 “ thou enrichedst, the kings whom thou
 “ didst gratify with the multitude of thy
 “ merchandize, fore afraid at thy ruin, shall
 “ cry bitterly in despair; they shall cut off
 “ their hair; they shall cast ashes on their
 “ heads; they shall roll in the dust, and la-
 “ ment over thee, saying, What city shall
 “ equal Tyre, that queen of the sea?” (*f*).

The vicissitudes of time, or rather the bar-
 barism of the Greeks of the Lower Empire,
 and the Mahometans, have accomplished this
 prediction. Instead of that ancient commerce
 so active and so extensive, Sour, reduced to
 a miserable village, has no other trade than
 the exportation of a few sacks of corn, and
 raw cotton, nor any merchant but a single
 Greek factor in the service of the French of
 Saide, who scarcely makes sufficient profit to
 maintain his family.

Nine leagues to the south of Sour, is the
 city of Acre, in Arabic called Akka, known

(*f*) See Ezekiel, chap. xxvii.

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in times of remote antiquity under the name of Aco, and afterwards by that of Ptolemaïs. It is situated at the northern cape of a bay, which extends in a semi-circle of three leagues, as far as the point of Carmel. After the expulsion of the Crusaders, it remained almost deserted; but in our time has again revived by the industry of Daher; and the works erected by Djezzar, within the last ten years, have rendered it one of the most considerable towns upon the coast.

The mosque of this Pacha is boasted as a master-piece of eastern taste. The bazar, or covered market, is not inferior even to those of Aleppo, and its public fountain surpasses in elegance those of Damascus. This last is also the most useful work; for, till then, Acre was only supplied by a ruinous well; the water, however, is still, as formerly, of a very indifferent quality. The Pacha has derived the more honour from these works, as he was himself both the engineer and architect: he formed the plans, drew the designs, and superintended the execution. The port of Acre is one of the best situated on the coast, as it is sheltered from the north and north-west winds by the town itself; but it is greatly
choaked

choaked up since the time of Fakr-el-din. Djezzar has contented himself with making a landing-place for boats. The fortifications, though more frequently repaired than any other in all Syria, are of no importance; there are only a few wretched low towers, near the port, on which cannon are mounted, but these rusty iron pieces are so bad, that some of them burst every time they are fired. Its defence on the land side, is only a mere garden wall without any ditch.

The country round it is a naked plain, longer than that of Sour, but not so wide; it is surrounded by a chain of hills, which make an angle at Cape Blanco, and extend as far as Carmel. The unevenness of the country causes the winter rains to settle in the low grounds, and form lakes which are unwholesome in summer from their infectious vapours. In other respects, the soil is fertile, and both corn and cotton are cultivated with the greatest success. These articles form the basis of the commerce of Acre, which is becoming more flourishing every day. Of late, the Pacha, by an abuse common throughout all the Turkish empire, has monopolized all the trade; no cotton can be

Q 2

fold

fold but to him, and from him every purchase must be made; in vain have the European merchants claimed the privileges granted them by the Sultan; Djezzar replied, that he was the Sultan in his country, and continued his monopoly. These merchants in general are French, and have six houses at Acre, with a consul; an Imperial agent too is lately settled there, and about a year ago, a resident for Russia.

That part of the bay of Acre in which ships anchor with the greatest security lies to the north of Mount Carmel, below the village of Haifa, (commonly called Caiffa). The bottom is good holding ground and does not chafe the cables; but this harbour is open to the north-west wind, which blows violently along all this coast. Mount Carmel, which commands it to the south, is a flattened cone, and very rocky; it is about two thousand feet high. We still find among the brambles, wild vines and olive trees, which prove that industry has formerly been employed even on this ungrateful soil: on the summit is a chapel dedicated to the prophet Elias, which affords an extensive prospect over the sea and land. To the south,

south, the country presents a chain of rugged hills, on the tops of which are a great number of oak and fir-trees, the retreat of wild boars and lynxes. As we turn towards the east, at six leagues distance, we perceive *Nafra* or Nazareth, so celebrated in the history of Christianity; it is an inconsiderable village, one third of whose inhabitants are Mahometans, and the remaining two thirds Greek Catholics. The fathers of the holy land, who are dependant on the Great Convent of Jerusalem, have an Hospitium and a church here. They are usually the farmers of the country. In the time of Daher, they were obliged to make a present to every wife he married, and he took great care to marry almost every week.

About two leagues to the south-east of Nafra is Mount Tabor, from which we have one of the finest views in Syria. This mountain is of the figure of a broken cone, eight hundred, or a thousand yards in height. The summit is two thirds of a league in circumference. Formerly it had a citadel, of which now only a few stones remain. From hence we discover, to the south, a series of vallies and mountains, which extend as far

as Jerulalem, while, to the east, the valley of Jordan, and Lake Tabaria, appear as if under our feet, and the lake seems as if enclosed in the crater of a volcano; beyond this, the eye loses itself, towards the plains of the Hauran; and then turning to the north, returns by the mountains of Hasbeya, and the Kasmia, to repose on the fertile plains of Galilee, without being able to reach the sea.

The eastern bank of Lake Tabaria offers nothing remarkable but the town the name of which it bears, and the fountain of warm mineral waters in the neighbourhood. This fountain is situated in the open country, at the distance of a quarter of a league from Tabaria. For want of cleaning it is filled with a black mud, which is a genuine Ethiops Martial. Persons attacked by rheumatic complaints find great relief, and are frequently cured by baths of this mud. The town is little else than a heap of ruins, and not inhabited at most by more than one hundred families. Seven leagues to the north of Tabarai, on the brow of a hill, stands the town or village of Safad, the seat of Daher's power. Under the government of this Shaik
an

an Arabian college flourished there, in which the Motoualis doctors instructed youth in the science of grammar, and the allegorical interpretation of the Koran. The Jews, who believe the Messiah will establish the seat of his empire at Safad, had also taken an affection to this place, and collected there to the number of fifty or sixty families; but the earthquake of 1759, destroyed every thing, and Safad, regarded by the Turks with an unfavourable eye, is now only a village almost deserted. As we ascend from Safad to the north, we follow a chain of lofty mountains, named Djebal-el-Shaik, among which are the sources of the Jordan, and likewise those of a number of rivulets which water the plain of Damascus. The high grounds from whence these rivulets flow, form a small district called Hasbeya, which is at present governed by an Emir, a relation and rival of the Emir Youssef, who farms it of Djezzar for sixty purses. The country is mountainous, and greatly resembles the Lower Lebanon. The chain of mountains which stretch along the vale of Bekaa, was called by the ancients Anti-Lebanon, from their being parallel to the Lebanon of the Druzes and Maronites;

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and

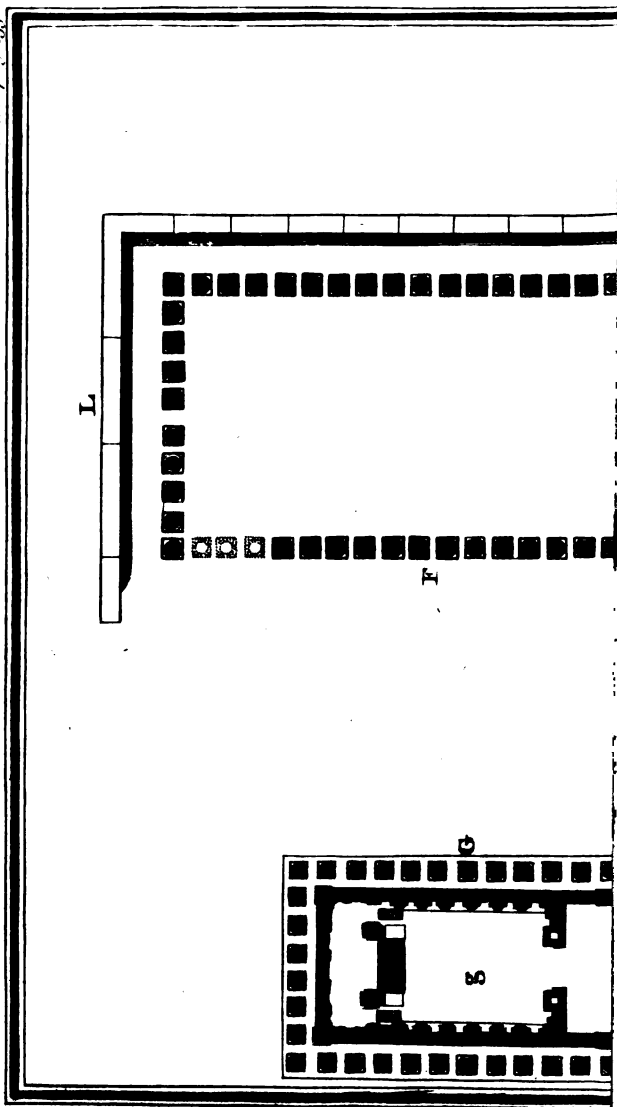
and the vale of Bekaa, which separates them, is properly the ancient Cœle Syria, or *hollow Syria*. This valley, by collecting the water of the mountains, has rendered it constantly one of the most fertile districts of all Syria, but the mountains concentrating the rays of the sun, produce likewise a heat in summer not inferior to that of Egypt. The air nevertheless is not unhealthy, no doubt because perpetually renewed by the north-wind, and because the waters never stagnate. The inhabitants sleep without injury upon their terraces. Before the earthquake of 1759, this whole country was covered with villages and plantations of the Motoualis; but the destruction occasioned by this terrible calamity, and the subsequent wars with the Turks, have almost destroyed every thing. The only place which merits attention is the city of Balbec.

Balbec, celebrated by the Greeks and Latins, under the name of *Heliopolis*, or the City of the Sun, is situated at the foot of Anti-Lebanon, precisely on the last rising ground where the mountain terminates in the plain. As we arrive from the south we discover the city at the distance of only a league
and

Figure	Figure	Figure	Figure
Figure 1	Figure 2	Figure 3	Figure 4
Figure 5	Figure 6	Figure 7	Figure 8
Figure 9	Figure 10	Figure 11	Figure 12
Figure 13	Figure 14	Figure 15	Figure 16
Figure 17	Figure 18	Figure 19	Figure 20
Figure 21	Figure 22	Figure 23	Figure 24
Figure 25	Figure 26	Figure 27	Figure 28
Figure 29	Figure 30	Figure 31	Figure 32
Figure 33	Figure 34	Figure 35	Figure 36
Figure 37	Figure 38	Figure 39	Figure 40
Figure 41	Figure 42	Figure 43	Figure 44
Figure 45	Figure 46	Figure 47	Figure 48
Figure 49	Figure 50	Figure 51	Figure 52
Figure 53	Figure 54	Figure 55	Figure 56
Figure 57	Figure 58	Figure 59	Figure 60
Figure 61	Figure 62	Figure 63	Figure 64
Figure 65	Figure 66	Figure 67	Figure 68
Figure 69	Figure 70	Figure 71	Figure 72
Figure 73	Figure 74	Figure 75	Figure 76
Figure 77	Figure 78	Figure 79	Figure 80
Figure 81	Figure 82	Figure 83	Figure 84
Figure 85	Figure 86	Figure 87	Figure 88
Figure 89	Figure 90	Figure 91	Figure 92
Figure 93	Figure 94	Figure 95	Figure 96
Figure 97	Figure 98	Figure 99	Figure 100

West

Tot. II. p. 233



and a half, behind a hedge of trees, over the verdant tops of which appears a white edging of domes and Minarets. After an hour's journey we reach these trees, which are very fine walnuts ; and soon after, crossing some ill cultivated gardens, by winding paths, arrive at the entrance of the city. We there perceive a ruined wall, flanked with square towers, which ascends the declivity to the right, and traces the precincts of the ancient city. This wall, which is only ten or twelve feet high, permits us to have a view of those void spaces, and heaps of ruins which are the invariable appendage of every Turkish city ; but what principally attracts our attention, is a large edifice on the left, which, by its lofty walls, and rich columns, manifestly appears to be one of those temples which antiquity has left for our admiration. These ruins, which are some of the most beautiful and best preserved of any in Asia, merit a particular description.

To give a just idea of them, we must suppose ourselves descending from the interior of the town. After having crossed the rubbish and huts with which it is filled, we arrive at a vacant place which appears to have been a square ;

square (g); there, in front, towards the west, we perceive a grand ruin (AA), which consists of two pavillions ornamented with pilastres, joined at their bottom angle by a wall one hundred and sixty feet in length. This front commands the open country from a sort of terrace, on the edge of which we distinguish, with difficulty, the bases of twelve columns, which formerly extended from one pavillion to the other, and formed a portico. The principal gate is obstructed by heaps of stones; but that obstacle surmounted, we enter an empty space, which is an hexagonal court (B) of one hundred and eighty feet diameter. This court is strewn with broken columns, mutilated capitals, and the remains of pilasters, entablatures, and cornices; around it is a row of ruined edifices (cc), which display all the ornaments of the richest architecture. At the end of this court, opposite the west, is an outlet (D), which formerly was a gate, through which we perceive a still more extensive range of ruins, whose magnificence strongly excites curiosity. To have a full prospect of these, we must

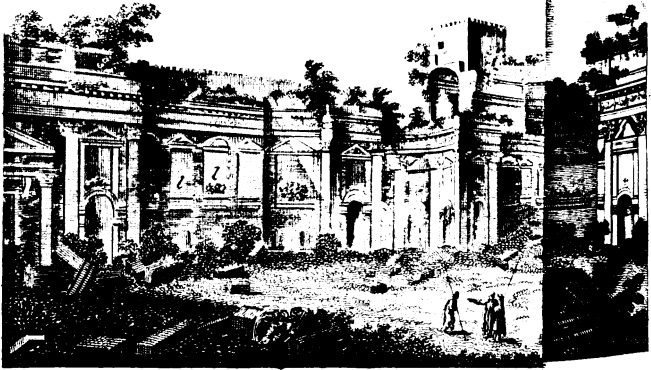
(g) See the plates.

ascend a slope, up which were the steps to this gate, and we then arrive at the entrance of a square court (E), much more spacious than the former (b), from which point of view the drawing of the annexed engraving was taken. The eye is first attracted by the end of this court, where six enormous and majestic columns render the scene astonishingly grand and picturesque. Another object not less interesting, is a second range of columns to the left, which appear to have been part of the peristyle of a temple (G); but before we pass thither, we cannot refuse particular attention to the edifices (H), which enclose this court on each side. They form a sort of gallery which contains various chambers (bbbb), seven of which may be reckoned in each of the principal wings: viz. two in a semicircle, and five in an oblong square. The bottom of these apartments still retains pediments of niches (i) and tabernacles (l), the supporters of which are destroyed. On the side of the court they are open, and present only four and six columns (m), totally

(b) It is three hundred and fifty feet wide, and three hundred and thirty-six in length.

destroyed.

destroyed. It is not easy to conceive the use of these apartments ; but this does not diminish our admiration at the beauty of their pilasters (*n*), and the richness of the frize of the entablature (*o*). Neither is it possible to avoid remarking the singular effect which results from the mixture of the garlands, the large foliage of the capitals, and the sculpture of wild plants with which they are every where ornamented. In traversing the length of the court, we find in the middle a little square esplanade (*i*), where was a pavillion, of which nothing remains but the foundation. At length we arrive at the foot of the six columns (*F*) ; and then first conceive all the boldness of their elevation, and the richness of their workmanship. Their shafts are twenty-one feet eight inches in circumference, and fifty-eight high ; so that the total height, including the entablature (*o*), is from seventy-one to seventy-two feet. The sight of this superb ruin thus solitary and unaccompanied, at first strikes us with astonishment ; but, on a more attentive examination, we discover a series of foundations, which mark an oblong square (*FF*) of two hundred and sixty-eight feet in length, and one hundred and forty-



i. Niche .

1. Tabernacles .

Y.M. Lebanon .

VIEW OF THE

forty-six wide; and which, it seems probable, was the peristyle of a grand temple, the primary purpose of this whole structure. It presented to the great court, that is to the east, a front of ten columns, with nineteen on each side, which, with the other six, make in all fifty-four. The ground on which it stood was an oblong square, on a level with this court, but narrower than it, so that there was only a terrace of twenty-seven feet wide round the colonnade. The esplanade this produces, fronts the open country, toward the west, by a sloping wall (L) of about thirty feet. This descent, as you approach the city, becomes less steep, so that the foundation of the pavillion is on a level with the termination of the hill, whence it is evident that the whole ground of the courts has been artificially raised. Such was the former state of this edifice; but the southern side of the grand temple was afterwards blocked up to build a smaller one, the peristyle and walls of which are still remaining. This temple (G), situated some feet lower than the other, presents a side of thirteen columns, by eight in front, (in all thirty-four), which are likewise of the Corinthian order; their shafts are

fifteen feet eight inches in circumference, and forty-four in height. The building they surround is an oblong square, the front of which, facing the east, is out of the line of the left wing of the great court. To reach it you must cross trunks of columns, heaps of stone, and a ruinous wall by which it is now hid. After surmounting these obstacles, you arrive at the gate, where you may survey the enclosure (g) which was once the habitation of a god; but instead of the awful scene of a prostrate people, and sacrifices offering by a multitude of priests, the sky, which is open from the falling in of the roof, only lets in light to shew a chaos of ruins, covered with dust and weeds. The walls, formerly enriched with all the ornaments of the Corinthian order, now present nothing but pediments of niches, and tabernacles of which almost all the supporters are fallen to the ground. Between these niches is a range of fluted pilasters, whose capitals support a broken entablature; but what remains of it, displays a rich frieze of foliage resting on the heads of satyrs, horses, bulls, &c. Over this entablature was the ancient roof, which was fifty-seven feet wide,

wide, and one hundred and ten in length. The walls which supported it are thirty-one feet high, and without a window. It is impossible to form any idea of the ornaments of this roof, except from the fragments lying on the ground; but it could not have been richer than the gallery of the peristyle: the principal remaining parts contain tablets in the form of lozenges, on which are represented Jupiter seated on his eagle; Leda caressed by the swan; Diana with her bow and crescent, and several busts which seem to be figures of emperors and empresses. It would lead me too far, to enter more minutely into the description of this astonishing edifice. The lovers of the arts will find it described with the greatest truth and accuracy in a work published at London in 1757, under the title of *Ruins of Balbec*. This work, compiled by Mr. Robert Wood, the world owes to the attention and liberality of Mr. Dawkins, who, in 1751, visited Balbec and Palmyra. It is impossible to add any thing to the fidelity of their description.

Several changes however have taken place since their journey: for example, they found nine large columns standing, and, in 1784, I
found

found but six (F). They reckoned nine and twenty at the lesser temple, but there now remain but twenty; the others have been overthrown by the earthquake of 1759. It has likewise so shaken the walls of the lesser temple, that the stone of the soffit (i) of the gate has slid between the two adjoining ones, and descended eight inches; by which means the body of the bird sculptured on that stone, is suspended, detached from its wings, and the two garlands, which hung from its beak and terminated in two Genii. Nature alone has not effected this devastation; the Turks have had their share in the destruction of the columns. Their motive is to procure the iron cramps, which serve to join the several blocks of which each column is composed. These cramps answer so well the end intended, that several of the columns are not even disjoined by their fall; one, among others, as Mr. Wood observes, has penetrated a stone of the temple wall without giving way. Nothing can surpass the workmanship of these columns; they are joined without any cement, yet there is not room for the blade of

(i) The *Soffit* is the cross stone at the top of a gate.

a knife

a knife between their interstices. After so many ages, they in general still retain their original whiteness. But, what is still more astonishing is, the enormous stones which compose the sloping wall. To the west (L) the second layer is formed of stones which are from twenty-eight to thirty-five feet long, by about nine in height. Over this layer, at the north-west angle (M), there are three stones, which alone occupy a space of one hundred and seventy-five feet and one half; viz. the first, fifty-eight feet seven inches; the second, fifty-eight feet eleven; and the third, exactly fifty-eight feet; and each of these are twelve feet thick. These stones are of a white granite, with large shining flakes, like Gypse; there is a quarry of this kind of stone under the whole city, and in the adjacent mountain, which is open in several places, and, among others, on the right, as we approach the city. There is still lying there a stone, hewn on three sides, which is sixty-nine feet two inches long, twelve feet ten inches broad, and thirteen feet three in thickness. By what means could the ancients move these enormous masses? This is doubt-

less a problem in mechanics curious to resolve. The inhabitants of Balbec have a very commodious manner of explaining it, by supposing these edifices to have been constructed by *Djenoun*, or Genii, who obeyed the orders of king Solomon; adding, that the motive of such immense works was to conceal, in subterraneous caverns, vast treasures, which still remain there. To discover these, many have descended into the vaults which range under the whole edifice; but the inutility of their researches, added to the oppressions and extortions of the governors, who have made their supposed discoveries a pretext, have at length disheartened them; but they imagine the Europeans will be more successful; nor would it be possible to persuade them, but what we are possessed of the magic art of destroying Talismans. It is in vain to oppose reason to ignorance and prejudice: and it would be no less ridiculous to attempt to prove to them that Solomon never was acquainted with the Corinthian order, which was only in use under the Roman emperors. But their traditions concerning this prince may suggest three important observations.

First,

First, that all tradition relative to high antiquity, is as false among the orientals as the Europeans; with them, as with us, facts which happened a hundred years before, when not preserved in writing, are altered, mutilated, or forgotten. To expect information from them with respect to events in the time of David or Alexander, would be as absurd as to make enquiries of the Flemish peasants concerning Clovis or Charlemagne.

Secondly, that throughout Syria, the Mahometans, as well as the Jews and Christians, attribute every great work to Solomon: not that the memory of him still remains by tradition in those countries, but from certain passages in the Old Testament; which, with the gospel, is the source of almost all their tradition, as these are the only historical books read or known; but as their expounders are very ignorant, their applications of what they are told, are generally very remote from truth: by an error of this kind, they pretend Balbec is *the house of the forest of Lebanon*, built by Solomon; nor do they approach nearer probability,

bability, when they attribute to that king the well of Tyre, and the buildings of Palmyra.

A third remark is, that the belief in hidden treasures has been confirmed by discoveries which have been really made from time to time. It is not ten years since a small coffer was found at *Hebron*, full of gold and silver medals, with an ancient Arabic book on medicine. In the country of the Druzes, an individual discovered, likewise, some time since, a jar with gold coin in the form of a crescent; but as the chiefs and governors claim a right to these discoveries, and ruin those who have made them, under pretext of obliging them to make restoration, those who find any thing endeavour carefully to conceal it; they secretly melt the antique coins, nay, frequently bury them again in the same place where they found them, from the same fears which caused their first concealment, and which prove the same tyranny formerly existed in these countries.

When we consider the extraordinary magnificence of the temple of Balbec, we cannot
but

but be astonished at the silence of the Greek and Roman authors. Mr. Wood, who has carefully examined all the ancient writers, has found no mention of it, except in a fragment of John of Antioch, who attributes the building of this edifice to Antoninus Pius. The inscriptions which remain corroborate this opinion, which perfectly accounts for the constant use of the Corinthian order, since that order was not in general use before the third age of Rome; but we ought by no means to allege as an additional proof, the bird sculptured over the gate; for if his crooked beak, large claws, and the caduceus he bears, give him the appearance of an eagle, the tuft of feathers on his head, like that of certain pigeons, proves that he is not the Roman eagle: besides that the same bird is found in the temple of Palmyra, and is therefore evidently an oriental eagle, consecrated to the sun, who was the divinity adored in both these temples. His worship existed at Balbec, in the most remote antiquity. His statue, which resembled that of Osiris, had been brought thither from the Heliopolis of Egypt, and the ceremonies

nies with which he was worshipped there have been described by Macrobius, in his curious work entitled *Saturnalia* (*k*). Mr. Wood supposes, with reason, that the name of Balbec, which in Syriac signifies *City of Bal*, or of the Sun, originated in this worship. The Greeks, by naming it Heliopolis, have, in this instance, only given a literal translation of the oriental word, a practice to which they have not always adhered. We are ignorant of the state of this city in remote antiquity; but it is to be presumed that its situation, on the road from Tyre to Palmyra, gave it some part of the commerce of those opulent capitals. Under the Romans, in the time of Augustus, it is mentioned as a garrison town; and there is still remaining, on the wall of the southern gate, on the right, as we enter, an inscription which proves the truth of this, the words KENTURIA PRIMA, in Greek characters, being very legible. One hundred and forty years after, Antoninus built

(*k*) He there calls it Heliopolis, a city of the *Affyrians*, the ancients frequently confounding that nation with the *Syrians*.

there

there the present temple, instead of the ancient one, which was doubtless falling into ruins; but Christianity having gained the ascendancy under Constantine, the modern temple was neglected, and afterwards converted into a church, a wall of which is now remaining, that hid the sanctuary of the idols. It continued thus until the invasion of the Arabs, when it is probable they envied the Christians so beautiful a building. The church, being less frequented, fell to decay; wars succeeded, and it was converted into a place of defence; battlements were built on the wall which surrounded it, on the pavillions and at the angles, which still subsist; and from that time, the temple, exposed to the ravages of war, fell rapidly to ruin.

The state of the city is not less deplorable; the wretched government of the Emirs of the house of Harfoushe, had already greatly impaired it, and the earthquake of 1759 completed its destruction. The wars of the Emir Yousef, and Djezzar, have rendered it still more deserted and ruinous; of five thousand inhabitants, at which num-

ber they were estimated in 1751, not twelve hundred are now remaining, and all these poor, without industry or commerce, and cultivating nothing but a little cotton, some maize, and water-melons. Throughout this part of the country, the soil is poor, and continues to be so, both as we proceed to the north, or to the south-east, toward Damascus.

C H A P. XXX.

Of the Pachalic of Damascus.

THE Pachalic of Damascus, the fourth and last of Syria, comprehends nearly the whole eastern part of that country. It extends, to the north, from Marra, on the road to Aleppo, as far as Habroun, in the south-east of Palestine. It is bounded to the west by the mountains of the Ansarians, those of Anti-Lebanon, and the upper part of the Jordan; then crossing that river in the country of Bisan, it includes Nablous, Jerusalem, and Habroun, and enters the desert to the east, into which it advances more or less, according as the country is capable of cultivation; but in general it does not extend to any considerable distance from the latter mountains, except where it approaches Tadmour or Palmyra, toward which it stretches full five days journey.

In this vast extent of country, the soil and its productions are very various; but the plains of the Hauran, and those on the banks of the Orontes, are the most fertile: they
produce

produce wheat, barley, doura, fefamum, and cotton. The soil of the country of Damascus, and the Upper Bekaa, is gravelly and poor, better adapted to fruits and tobacco, than any thing else. On the mountains are cultivated olive, mulberry, and fruit trees, and in some places vines, from which the Greeks make wine, and the Mahometans dried raisins.

The Pacha enjoys all the privileges of his post, which are more considerable than those of any other Pachalic; for besides the farm of all the customs and imposts, and an absolute authority, he is also conductor of the sacred caravan of Mecca, under the highly respected title of *Emir Hadj* (1). The Mahometans consider this office as so important, and entitled to such reverence, that the person of a Pacha who acquits himself well in it, becomes inviolable even by the Sultan: it is no longer permitted to *shed his blood*. But the Divan has invented a method of satisfying its vengeance on those who are protected by this

(1) The caravan of Mecca bears exclusively the name of *Hadi*, which signifies pilgrimage: the others are called simply *Kasle*.

privilege,

privilege, without departing from the literal expression of the law, by ordering them to be pounded in a mortar, or smothered in a sack, of which there have been various instances.

The tribute of the Pacha to the Sultan, is no more than forty-five purses (two thousand three hundred and forty-three pounds); but he is charged with all the expences of the Hadj: these are estimated at six thousand purses, or three hundred and twelve thousand five hundred pounds. They consist of provisions of corn, barley, rice, &c. and in the hire of camels, which must be provided for the escort and a great number of pilgrims. Besides this, eighteen hundred purses must be paid to the Arab tribes, who dwell near the road, to secure a free passage. The Pacha reimburses himself by the miri, or duty upon lands, either by collecting it himself, or by farming it out, as he does in many places. He does not receive the customs, these are collected by a *Defdar-dar*, or master of the registers, and are appointed for the pay of the Janisaries, and governors of castles, which are on the route to Mecca. Besides his other emoluments, the Pacha is the heir of all the pilgrims who die on the journey, and this is not the

the least of his perquisites; for it is invariably observed that those are the richest of the pilgrims. Besides all this, he has the profits he makes by lending money for interest to merchants and farmers, and taking from them whatever he thinks proper, in the way of *balse*, or extortion.

His military establishment consists in six or seven hundred Janisaries, better conditioned, and more insolent, than in other parts of the country; as many Barbary Arabs, who are naked, and plunderers as they are every where, and in eight or nine hundred Delli-bashes, or horsemen. These troops, which in Syria pass for a considerable army, are necessary, not only by way of escort for the caravan, and to restrain the Arabs, but likewise to enable him to collect the miri from his own subjects. Every year, three months before the departure of the Hadj, he makes what is called his circuit; that is, the travels through his vast government, at the head of his soldiers, and raises contributions on the towns and villages. This is seldom effected without resistance; the ignorant populace, excited by factious chiefs, or provoked by the injustice of the Pacha, frequently revolt, and
pay

pay the sums levied on them with the musket; the inhabitants of Nablous, Bethlehem, and Habroun, are famous for this refractoriness, which has procured them peculiar privileges; but when opportunity offers, they are made to pay ten-fold. The Pachalic of Damascus, from its situation, is more exposed than any other to the incursions of the Bedouin Arabs; yet it is remarked to be the least ravaged of any in Syria. The reason assigned is, that instead of frequently changing the Pachas, as is practised in the other governments, the Porte usually bestows this pachalic for life: in the present century it was held for fifty years by a rich family of Damascus, called El-Adm, a father and three brothers of which succeeded each other. Asad, the last of them, whom I have before mentioned in the history of Daher, held it fifteen years, during which time he did an infinite deal of good. He had likewise established such a degree of discipline among the soldiers as to prevent the peasants from being injured by their robberies and extortions. His passion, like that of all men in office throughout Turkey, was to amass money, but he did not let it remain idle in his coffers, and,
by

by a moderation unheard of in this country, required no more interest for it than fix per cent (*m*). An anecdote is related of him which will give an idea of his character: Being one day in want of money, the informers, by whom the Pachas are constantly surrounded, advised him to levy a contribution on the Christians, and on the manufacturers of stuffs. "How much do you think that may produce?" said Afad. "Fifty or sixty purses," replied they. "But," answered he, "these people are by no means rich, how will they raise that sum?" "My Lord, they will sell their wives jewels: and, besides, they are Christian dogs." "I'll shew you," replied the Pacha, "that I am an abler extortioner than you." The same day he sent an order to the Mufti to wait upon him secretly, and at night. As soon as the Mufti arrived, Afad told him, "he was informed he had long led a very irregular life in private; that he, though the head of the law, had indulged himself in drinking wine and eating pork,

(*m*) In Syria and in Egypt, the ordinary interest is from twelve to fifteen, nay, frequently from twenty to thirty per cent.

contrary

“ contrary to the precepts of the most pure
 “ book; assuring him, at the same time, he
 “ was determined to inform against him to
 “ the Mufti of Stamboul (Constantinople),
 “ but that he wished to give him timely no-
 “ tice, that he might not reproach him with
 “ perfidiousness.” The Mufti, terrified at
 this menace, conjured him to desist; and, as
 such offers are an open and allowed traffic
 among the Turks, promised him a present of
 a thousand piaftres. The Pacha rejected the
 offer; the Mufti doubled and trebled the sum,
 till at length they agreed for six thousand
 piaftres, with the reciprocal engagement
 to observe a profound silence. The next
 day, Afad sends for the Cadi, and addresses
 him in the same manner; tells him he is in-
 formed of several flagrant abuses in his ad-
 ministration; and that he is no stranger to
 a certain affair, which may perhaps cost him
 his head. The Cadi, confounded, implores
 his clemency, negotiates like the Mufti; ac-
 commodates the matter for a like sum, and
 retires, congratulating himself that he has
 escaped even at that price. He proceeded in
 the same manner with the Wali, the Nakib,
 the Aga of the Janisaries, the Mohtefeb, and,
 after

after them, with the wealthiest Turkish and Christian merchants. Each of these, charged with offences peculiar to their situations; and, above all, accused of intrigues, were anxious to purchase pardon by contributions. When the sum total was collected, the Pacha, being again with his intimates, thus addressed them, "Have you heard it reported, in Damascus, that Afad has been guilty of extortion?" "No, Seignior." By what means, then, have I found the two hundred purses I now shew you?" The informers began to exclaim in great admiration, and enquire what method he had employed. "I have fleeced the rams," replied he, "and not skinned the lambs and the kids."

After fifteen years reign, the people of Damascus were deprived of this man, by intrigues, the history of which is thus related: About the year 1755, one of the black eunuchs of the seraglio, making the pilgrimage of Mecca, took up his quarters with Afad; but not contented with the simple hospitality with which he was entertained, he would not return by Damascus, but took the road to Gaza. Hosein Pacha, who then was Governor of that town, took care to give him a sumptuous entertainment.

tainment. The eunuch, on his return to Constantinople, did not forget the treatment he had received from his two hosts, and, to shew at once his gratitude and resentment, determined to ruin Afad, and raise Hosein to his dignity. His intrigues were so successful that, in the year 1756, Jerusalem was detached from the government of Damascus, and bestowed upon Hosein, under the title of a Pachalic, and the following year he obtained that of Damascus. Afad, thus deposed, retired with his household into the desert, to avoid still greater disgrace. The time of the caravan arrived: Hosein conducted it, agreeable to the duty of his station; but, on his return, having quarrelled with the Arabs, concerning some payment they claimed, they attacked him, defeated the escort, and entirely plundered the caravan, in 1757. On the news of this disaster, the whole empire was thrown into as much confusion as could have been occasioned by the loss of the most important battle. The families of twenty thousand pilgrims, who had perished with thirst and hunger, or been slain by the Arabs; the relations of a multitude of women who had been carried into slavery; the merchants interested in

the plundered caravan, all demanded vengeance on the cowardice of the Emir Hadj, and the sacrilege of the Bedouins. The Porte, alarmed, at first proscribed the head of Hosein; but he concealed himself so well, that it was impossible to surprise him; while he, from his retreat, acting in concert with the Eunuch his protector, undertook to exculpate himself, in which, after three months, he succeeded, by producing a real or fictitious letter of Afad, by which it appeared that this Pacha had excited the Arabs to attack the caravan, to revenge himself of Hosein. The proscription was now turned against Afad, and nothing but the opportunity wanting to carry it into execution.

The pachalic, however, remained vacant: Hosein, disgraced as he was, could not resume his government. The Porte, desiring to revenge the late affront, and provide for the safety of the pilgrims in future, made choice of a singular man, whose character and history deserve to be noticed. This man, named Abd-allah-el-Satadji, was born near Bagdad, in an obscure station. Entering very young into the service of the Pacha, he had passed the first years of his life in camps and

and war, and been present, as a common soldier, in all the campaigns of the Turks against the famous Shah-Thamas-Kouli-Khan: and the bravery and abilities he displayed, raised him, step by step, even to the dignity of Pacha of Bagdad. Advanced to this eminent post, he conducted himself with so much firmness and prudence, that he restored peace to the country from both foreign and domestic wars. The simple and military life he continued to lead requiring no great supplies of money, he amassed none; but the great officers of the Seraglio of Constantinople, who derived no profits from his moderation, did not approve of this disinterestedness, and waited only for a pretext to remove him.

This they soon found. Abdallah had kept back the sum of one hundred thousand livres (above four thousand pounds), arising from the estate of a merchant. Scarcely had the Pacha received it, before it was demanded from him. In vain did he represent, that he had used it to pay some old arrears of the troops; in vain did he request time: the Visir only pressed him the more closely; and, on a second refusal, dispatched a black eunuch, secretly provided with a kat-sheif, to take off his

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head.

head. The eunuch, arriving at Bagdad, feigned himself a sick person travelling for his health ; and, as such, sent his respects to the Pacha ; observing the usual forms of politeness, and requesting permission to pay him a visit. Abd-allah, well acquainted with the practices of the Divan, was distrustful of so much complaisance, and suspected some secret mischief. His treasurer, not less versed in such plots, and greatly attached to his person, confirmed him in these suspicions ; and, in order to discover the truth, proposed to go and search the eunuch's baggage, while he and his retinue should be paying their visit to the Pacha. Abd-allah approved the expedient, and, at the hour appointed, the treasurer repaired to the tent of the eunuch, and made so careful a search, that he found the kat-sheerif concealed in the lapelles of a pelisse. Immediately he flew to the Pacha, and, sending for him into an adjoining room, told him what he had discovered (*n*). Abd-allah, furnished with the fatal writing, hid it in his bosom, and returned to the apart-

(*n*) I have these facts from a person who was intimate with this treasurer, and had seen Abd-allah at Jerusalem.

ment ;

ment; when resuming, with an air of the greatest indifference, his conversation with the eunuch : "The more I think of it," said he, "Seignior Aga, the more I am astonished at your journey into this country; Bagdad is so far from Stamboul, and we can boast so little of our air, that I can scarcely believe you have come hither for no other purpose but the re-establishment of your health." "It is true," replied the Aga; "I am also commissioned to demand of you something on account of the four thousand pounds you received." "We will say nothing of that," answered the Pacha, "but come," added he with an air of firmness, "confess that you have likewise orders to bring with you my head. Observe what I say, you know my character, and you know my word may be depended on: I now assure you that, if you make an open declaration of the truth, you shall depart without the least injury." The eunuch now began a long defence, protesting that he came with no such black intentions. "*By my head*," said Abd-allah, "confess to me the truth:" the eunuch still denied. "*By your head*;" he still denied: "Take
S 3 care,

“ care, *By the head of the Sultan;*” he still persisted. “ Be it so,” says Abd-allah, the “ matter is decided: thou hast pronounced thy “ doom;” and drawing forth the kat-sheerif, “ know you this paper? Thus you govern at “ Constantinople! Yes, you are a troop of “ villains, who sport with the lives of who- “ ever happen to displease you, and shed, “ without remorse, the blood of the servants “ of the Sultan. The Visir must have heads: “ he shall have one; off with the head of “ that dog, and send it to Constantinople.” The order was executed on the spot, and the eunuch’s retinue, dismissed, departed with his head.

After this decisive stroke, Abd-allah might have availed himself of his popularity to revolt; but he rather chose to retire among the Curds. Here the pardon of the Sultan was sent him, and an order, appointing him Pacha of Damascus. Wearied of his exile, and destitute of money, he accepted the commission, and set out with one hundred men who followed his fortune. On his arrival on the frontiers of his new government, he learnt that Afad was encamped in the neighbourhood: he had heard him spoken of as the greatest
4 man

man in Syria, and was desirous of seeing him. He therefore disguised himself, and, accompanied only by six horsemen, repaired to his camp, and desired to speak with him. He was introduced, as is usual in these camps, without much ceremony; and, after the customary salutations, Afad enquired of him whither he was going, and whence he came? Abd-allah replied, he was one of six or seven Curd horsemen who were seeking employment, and hearing Satadji was appointed to the Pachalic of Damascus, were going to apply to him; but being informed on their way that Afad was encamped in the neighbourhood, they had come to request of him provisions for themselves and their horses. With pleasure, replied Afad; but do you know Satadji? Yes. What sort of a man is he? Is he fond of money? No; Satadji cares very little for money or pelisses, or shawls or pearls, or women; he is fond of nothing but well-tempered arms, good horses, and war. He does justice, protects the widow and the orphan, reads the Koran, and lives on butter and milk. Is he old? said Afad. Fatigue has made him appear older than he is: he is covered with wounds; he has received a blow

with a sabre, which has made him lame of his left leg; and another, which makes him lean his head on his right shoulder. In short, said he, hastily rising, he is, in shape and features, exactly my picture. At these words Asad turned pale, and gave himself up for lost; but Abd-allah, sitting down again, said to him, Brother, fear nothing; I am not sent by troop of banditti; I come not to betray thee: on the contrary, if I can render thee any service, command me, for we are both held in the same estimation with our masters; they have recalled me, because they wish to chastise the Bedouins; when they have gratified their revenge on them, they will again lay plots to deprive me of my head. *God is great; what he has decreed will come to pass.*

With these sentiments, Abd-allah repaired to Damascus; where he restored good order, put an end to the extortions of the soldiery, and conducted the caravan, sabre in hand, without paying a piastre to the Arabs. During his administration, which lasted two years, the country enjoyed the most perfect tranquillity. The inhabitants of Damascus still say, that under his government they slept

in security with open doors. He himself, frequently disguised as one of the poorest of the people, saw every thing with his own eyes. The acts of justice he sometimes did, in consequence of his discoveries under these disguises, produced a salutary circumspection. Some instances are still told by the people with pleasure. It is said, for example, that being on his circuit at Jerusalem, he had prohibited his soldiers from either taking, or ordering any thing without paying. One day, when he was going about in the disguise of a poor man with a little plate of lentiles in his hand, a soldier, who had a faggot on his shoulders, would force him to carry it. After some resistance, he took it on his back, while the Delibashe following him, drove him on with imprecations. Another soldier, knowing the Pacha, made a sign to his comrade, who instantly took to flight, and escaped through the cross streets. After proceeding a few paces, Abd-allah, no longer hearing his man, turned round, and vexed at missing his aim, threw his burthen on the ground, saying, The rascally knavish dog! he has both robbed me of my hire, and carried off my plate of lentiles. But the soldier did not long escape;

TRAVELS IN

escape; for, a few days after, the Pacha, again surprising him in the act of robbing a poor woman's garden, and ill treating her, ordered his head to be struck off upon the spot.

As for himself, he was unable to ward off the destiny he had foreseen. After escaping several times from hired assassins, he was poisoned by his nephew. This he discovered before he died, and, sending for his murderer: Wretch that thou art, said he, the villains have seduced thee, thou hast poisoned me to profit by my spoils: it is in my power, before I die, to blast thy hopes, and punish thy ingratitude; but I know the Turks; they will be my avengers. In fact, Satadji had scarcely breathed his last before a Capidji produced an order to strangle the nephew: which was executed. The whole history of the Turks proves that they love treason, but invariably punish the traitors. Since Abdallah, the Pachalic of Damascus has passed successively into the hands of Selik, Osman, Mohammed, and Darouish, the son of Osman, who held it in 1784. This man, who has not the talents of his father, resembles him in his tyrannical disposition, of which the following is a striking instance. In the month of November,

November, 1784, a village of Greek Christians, near Damascus, which had paid the miri, was called upon to pay it a second time. The Shaiks, appealing to the register, refused to comply; but a night or two after, a party of soldiers attacked the village, and slew one and thirty persons. The wretched peasants, in consternation, carried the heads to Damascus, and demanded justice of the Pacha. After hearing their complaints, Darouish told them to leave the heads in the Greek church, while he made the necessary enquiries. Three days elapsed, and the heads putrifying, the Christians wished to bury them; but for this the Pacha's permission was necessary, for which they were under the necessity of paying forty purses, or above two thousand pounds.

About a year ago, (in 1785), Djezzar, availing himself of the influence his money had procured him at the Porte, dispossessed Darouish, and governs at present at Damascus, to which it is said he is endeavouring to add the pachalic of Aleppo. But it is not probable the Porte will consent to grant him this, as such an increase of power would render him master of all Syria; but besides that
the

the necessity of observing the Russians leaves the Divan no leisure to consider these affairs, it concerns itself but little about the revolt of the governors, since constant experience has proved, that, sooner or later, they never fail to fall into the snares that are laid for them. Nor is Djezzar likely to be an exception to this rule; for though not destitute of talents, and especially cunning (*o*), his abilities are unequal to the task of conceiving and accomplishing a great revolution. The course he pursues is that of all his predecessors: he only concerns himself with the welfare of the public, so far as it coincides with his private interest. The Mosque he has built at Acre is a monument of pure vanity, on which he has expended, without any advantage, the sum of three millions of livres, (one hundred and twenty five thousand pounds): his Bazar is undoubtedly of more utility; but before he began to build a market for the sale of corn and vegetables, he should have paid some attention to the state of agriculture, by which they are to be pro-

(*o*) Baron de Tott has called Djezzar a *lion*: I think he would have defined him better by calling him a *wolf*.

duced,

duced, and this is in a very languishing condition indeed, except close to the walls of Acre. The principal part of his expences consists in his gardens, his baths, and his white women: of the latter he possessed eighteen in 1784, and the luxury of these women is most enormous. As he is now growing old and has lost the relish for other pleasures, he regards nothing but amassing money. His avarice has alienated his soldiers, and his severity created him enemies even in his own house. Two of his pages have already attempted to assassinate him; he has had the good luck to escape their pistols, but fortune will not always favour him; he will one day share the fate of so many others, and be taken by surprize, when he will reap no other fruit from his industry in heaping up wealth, than the eagerness of the Porte to obtain possession of it, and the hatred of the people he has oppressed. Let us now return to the most remarkable places in this Pachalic.

The first that presents itself is the city of Damascus, the capital and residence of the Pachas. The Arabs call it *el-Sham*, agreeable to their custom of bestowing the name
of

of the country on its capital. The ancient Oriental name of *Damask* is known only to geographers. This city is situated in a vast plain, open to the south and east, and shut in toward the west and north by mountains, which limit the view at no great distance; but in return, a number of rivulets arise from these mountains, which render the territory of Damascus the best watered and most delicious province of all Syria; the Arabs speak of it with enthusiasm; and think they can never sufficiently extol the freshness and verdure of its orchards, the abundance and variety of its fruits, its numerous streams, and the clearness of its rills and fountains. This is also the only part of Syria where there are detached pleasure houses in the open country. The natives must set a higher value on these advantages, as they are more rare in the adjacent provinces. In other respects, the soil, which is poor, gravelly, and of a reddish colour, is ill adapted for corn; but is on that account more suitable to fruits, which are here excellently flavoured. No city contains so many canals and fountains; each house has one; and all these waters are furnished by three rivulets, or branches of the same

same river, which after fertilizing the gardens for a course of three leagues, flow into a hollow of the Desert to the south-east, where they form a morafs called *Bebairat-el-Mardj*, or the Lake of the Meadow.

With fuch a fituation it cannot be difputed that Damafcus is one of the moft agreeable cities in Turkey; but it is ftill deficient in point of falubrity. The inhabitants complain with reafon, that the white waters of the Barrada are cold and hard; and it is obferved that the natives are fubject to obftructions; that the whitenefs of their fkin is rather the palenefs of ficknefs, than the colour of health; and that the too great ufe of fruit, particularly of apricots, occasions there, every fummer and autumn, intermittent fevers and dysenteries.

Damafcus is much longer than it is broad. M. Niebuhr, who has given a plan of it, makes it three thoufand two hundred and fifty toifes, or fomething lefs than a league and a half in circumference. Comparing thefe dimensions with thofe of Aleppo, I fuppofe that Damafcus may contain eighty thoufand inhabitants. The greater part of the feare Arabs and Turks; the number of
Christians

Christians are estimated at above fifteen thousand, two thirds of whom are Schismatics. The Turks never speak of the people of Damascus without observing, that they are the most mischievous in the whole empire; the Arabs, by a play on words, have made this proverb : *Shami, sboumi*, The man of Damascus, wicked : on the contrary, they say of the people of Aleppo, *Halabi, tchelebi*, The Aleppo man, a *petit maitre*. From a prejudice arising from the difference of religions, they also add, that the Christians there are more vile and knavish than elsewhere; doubtless, because the Mahometans are there more fanatic and more insolent. In this they resemble the inhabitants of Cairo; like them, they detest the Franks, nor is it possible to appear at Damascus in a European dress; our merchants have not been able to form any establishment there; we only meet with two Capuchin Missionaries, and a physician who is not permitted to practise.

This hatred the people of Damascus bear the Christians, is maintained and increased by their communication with Mecca. Their city, say they, is a holy place, since it is
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one of the gates of the Caaba: for Damascus is the rendezvous for all the pilgrims from the north of Asia, as Cairo is for those from Africa. Their number every year amounts to from thirty to fifty thousand; many of them repair hither four months before the time, but the greatest number only at the end of the Ramadan. Damascus then resembles an immense fair; nothing is to be seen but strangers from all parts of Turkey, and even Persia; and every place is full of camels, horses, mules, and merchandize. At length, after some days preparations, all this vast multitude set out confusedly on their march, and, travelling by the confines of the Desert, arrive in forty days at Mecca, for the festival of the Bairam. As this caravan traverses the country of several independent Arab tribes, it is necessary to make treaties with the Bedouins, to allow them certain sums of money for a free passage, and take them for guides. There are frequent disputes on this subject between the Shaiks, of which the Pacha avails himself to make a better bargain; but in general the preference is given to the tribe of Sardia, which encamps to the south of Damascus, along the Hauran, the Pacha

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sends to the Shaik a mace, a tent, and a pelisse, to signify he takes him as his chief conductor. From this moment it is the Shaik's business to furnish camels at a stated price; these he hires likewise from his tribe and his allies; the Pacha is responsible for no damages, and all losses are on his own account. On an average, ten thousand camels perish yearly; which forms a very advantageous article of commerce for the Arabs.

It must not be imagined that the sole motive of all these expences and fatigues is devotion. Pecuniary interest has a more considerable share in this expedition. The caravan affords the means of engrossing every lucrative branch of commerce; almost all the pilgrims convert it into a matter of speculation. On leaving their own country, they load themselves with merchandize, which they sell on the road; the specie arising from this, added to what they have brought with them, is conveyed to Mecca, where they exchange it for muslins and India goods from Malabar and Bengal, the shawls of Cashmire, the aloes of Tonquin, the diamonds of Golconda, the pearls of Barhain, pepper, and a
great

great quantity of coffee from the Yemen. Sometimes the Arabs of the Desert deceive the expectation of the merchant, by pillaging the stragglers, and carrying off detached parties of the caravan. But in general the pilgrims arrive safe ; in which case their profits are very considerable. At all events they are recompensed in the veneration attached to the title of *Hadji*, (Pilgrim) ; and by the pleasure of boasting to their countrymen of the wonders of the Caaba, and Mount Arafat ; of magnifying the prodigious crouds of pilgrims, and the number of victims, on the day of the Bairam ; and recounting the dangers and fatigues they have undergone, the extraordinary figure of the Bedouins, the Desert without water, and the tomb of the prophet at Medina, which, however, is neither suspended by a load-stone, nor the principal object of their pilgrimage. These wonderful tales produce their usual effect, that is, they excite the admiration and enthusiasm of the audience, though, from the confession of sincere pilgrims, nothing can be more wretched than this journey. Accordingly, this transient admiration has not prevented a proverb, which does little honor to these pious travellers.

Distrust thy neighbour, says the Arab, *if he has made a Hadj; but if he has made two, make haste to leave thy house*: and, in fact, experience has proved that the greater part of the devotees of Mecca are peculiarly insolent and treacherous, as if they wished to recompense themselves for having been dupes, by becoming knaves.

By means of this caravan, Damascus is become the centre of a very extensive commerce. By Aleppo, the merchants of this city correspond with Armenia, Anadolia, the Diarbekar, and even with Persia. They send caravans to Cairo, which, following a route frequented in the time of the patriarchs, take their course by Djefr-Yakoub, Tabaria, Nablous and Gaza. In return, they receive the merchandize of Constantinople and Europe, by way of Saide and Bairout. The home consumption is balanced by silk and cotton stuffs, which are manufactured here in great quantities, and are very well made; by the dried fruits of their own growth, and sweetmeat cakes of roses, apricots and peaches, of which Turkey consumes to the amount of near a million of livres, (about forty thousand pounds). The remainder, paid for by the
course

course of exchange, occasions a considerable circulation of money in custom-house duties, and the commission of the merchants. This commerce has existed in these countries from the earliest antiquity. It has flowed through different channels, according to the changes of the government, and other circumstances; but it has every where left very apparent traces of the opulence it produced.

The Pachalic of which I am speaking, affords a monument of this kind too remarkable to be passed over in silence; I mean the remains of Palmyra, a city celebrated in the third age of Rome, for the part it took in the differences between the Parthians and the Romans, the power and fall of Odenatus and Zenobia, and its destruction under Aurelian. From that time history preserved the name of this great city, but it was merely the name, for the world had very confused ideas of the real grandeur and power it had possessed. They were scarcely even suspected in Europe, until towards the end of the last century, when some English merchants of Aleppo, tired with hearing the Bedouins talk of the immense ruins to be found in the Desert, re-

solved to ascertain the truth of these extraordinary relations. The first attempt was made in 1678, but without success; the adventurers were robbed of all they had by the Arabs, and obliged to return without accomplishing their design. They again took courage in 1691, and at length obtained a sight of the antiquities in question. Their narrative, published in the philosophical transactions, met with many who refused belief; men could neither conceive nor persuade themselves that in a spot so remote from any habitable place, such a magnificent city as their drawings described could have subsisted. But since Mr. Dawkins published, in 1753, the plans and views he himself had taken on the spot in 1751, all doubts are at an end, and it is universally acknowledged that antiquity has left nothing, either in Greece or Italy, to be compared with the magnificence of the ruins of Palmyra.

I shall give a summary of the relation of Mr. Wood, the companion and editor of the journey of Mr Dawkins (*p*)

(*p*) *Ruins of Palmyra*, by Robert Wood, 1 vol. in folio with fifty plates, London 1753.

“ After

“ After learning at Damascus that Tadmour, or Palmyra, depended on an Aga who resided at Haffia, we repaired, in four days, to that village, which is situated in the Desert, on the route from Damascus to Aleppo. The Aga received us with that hospitality which is so common in these countries amongst all ranks of people, and, though extremely surprized at our curiosity, gave us instructions how to satisfy it in the best manner. We set out from Haffia the 11th of March 1751, with an escort of the Aga's best Arab horsemen, armed with guns and long pikes; and travelled in four hours to Sudud, through a barren plain, scarce affording a little browsing to antelopes, of which we saw a great number. Sudud is a poor small village, inhabited by Maronite Christians. Its houses are built of no better materials than mud dried in the sun. They cultivate as much ground about the village as is necessary for their bare subsistence, and make a good red wine. After dinner, we continued our journey, and arrived in three hours at

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“ Owareen,

“ Owareen, a Turkish village, where we
“ lay.

“ Owareen has the same appearance of
“ poverty as Sudud; but we found a few
“ ruins there, which shew it to have been
“ formerly a more considerable place. We
“ remarked a village near this entirely aban-
“ doned by its inhabitants, which happens
“ often in these countries; where the lands
“ have no acquired value from cultivation,
“ and are often deserted to avoid oppression.
“ We set out from Owareen the 12th, and
“ arrived in three hours at Carietein, keep-
“ ing always in the direction of a point and
“ a half to the south of the east. This
“ village differs from the former, only by
“ being a little larger. It was thought pro-
“ per we should stay here this day, as well
“ to collect the rest of our escort which the
“ Aga had ordered to attend us, as to pre-
“ pare our people and cattle for the fatigue
“ of the remaining part of our journey; for,
“ though we could not perform it in less
“ time than twenty-four hours, it could not
“ be divided into stages, as there is no water
“ in that part of the Desert.

“ We

“ We left Carietein the 13th, being in
 “ all about two hundred persons, with the
 “ same number of beasts of carriage, consist-
 “ ing of an odd mixture of asses, mules, and
 “ camels. Our route was a little to the east
 “ of the north, through a flat sandy plain,
 “ without either tree or water, the whole
 “ about ten miles broad, and bounded, to our
 “ right and left, by a ridge of barren hills,
 “ which seemed to join about two miles
 “ before we arrived at Palmyra.

“ The 14th, about noon, we arrived at the
 “ end of the plain, where the hills seemed to
 “ meet. We find between these hills a vale,
 “ through which an aqueduct (now ruined)
 “ formerly conveyed water to Palmyra. In
 “ this vale, to our right and left, were several
 “ square towers of a considerable height,
 “ which upon a nearer approach, we found
 “ were the sepulchres of the ancient Palmy-
 “ renes. We had scarce passed these venera-
 “ ble monuments, than the hills opening,
 “ discovered to us, all at once, the greatest
 “ quantity of ruins we had ever seen (*q*), and,
 “ behind them, towards the Euphrates, a flat

(*q*) Though these travellers had visited *Greece* and *Italy*,
 “ waste

“ waste as far as the eye could reach, without
“ any object which shewed either life or
“ motion. It is scarce possible to imagine
“ any thing more striking than this view.
“ So great a number of Corinthian pillars,
“ with so little wall or solid building,
“ afforded a most romantic variety of prof-
“ pect.”

Undoubtedly the effect of such a sight is not to be communicated ; but, to enable the reader to form a better idea of it, I annex the perspective view. To have a just conception of the whole, the dimensions must be supplied by the imagination. This narrow space must be considered as a vast plain, those minute shafts, as columns whose base alone exceeds the height of a man. The reader must represent to himself that range of erect columns, as occupying an extent of more than twenty-six hundred yards, and concealing a multitude of other edifices behind them. In this space we sometimes find a palace, of which nothing remains but the courts and walls ; sometimes a temple whose peristyle is half thrown down ; and now, a portico, a gallery, or triumphal arch. Here stand groups of columns, whose symmetry is

destroyed by the fall of many of them; there we see them ranged in rows of such length, that similar to rows of trees, they deceive the sight, and assume the appearance of continued walls. If from this striking scene we cast our eyes upon the ground, another, almost as varied, presents itself: on all sides we behold nothing but subverted shafts, some whole, others shattered to pieces, or dislocated in their joints; and on which side soever we look, the earth is strewed with vast stones half buried, with broken entablatures, damaged capitals, mutilated frizes, disfigured reliefs, effaced sculptures, violated tombs, and altars defiled by dust.

The following are the references to the annexed plate.

A, a Turkish castle, now deserted.

B, a sepulchre.

C, a ruined Turkish fortress.

D, a sepulchre, from whence begins a range of columns which extend as far as R, upwards of twelve hundred yards.

E, an

E, an edifice supposed to be built by Dioclesian.

F, Ruins of a sepulchre.

G, columns disposed in the form of the peristyle of a temple.

H, a grand edifice of which there remain only four columns.

I, Ruins of a Christian church.

K, a range of columns which seem to have formed part of a portico, and which terminate in the four large pedestals marked L.

L, four large pedestals.

M, the cell of a temple with part of its peristyle.

N, a small temple.

O, a number of columns which have the false appearance of a Circus.

P, four magnificent columns of Granite.

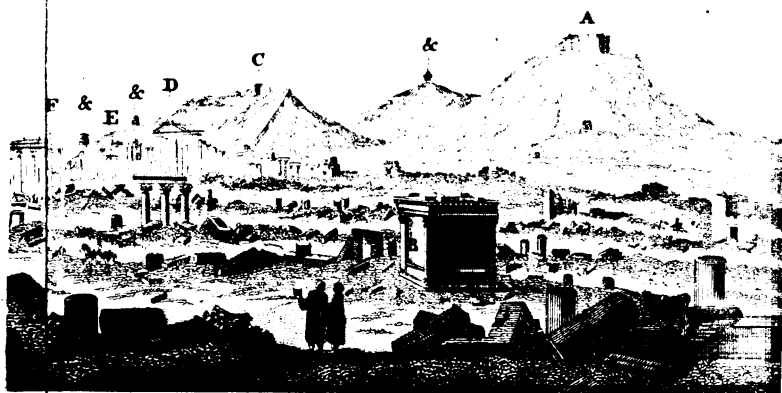
Q, columns disposed in the form of the peristyle of a temple.

R, an arch, at which the portico which begins at D terminates.

S, a large column.

T, a Turkish Mosque in ruins, with its Minaret, &c.

U, huge



U, huge columns, the largest, of which, with its entablature, has been thrown down.

V, little inclosures of land where the Arabs cultivate olive-trees and corn.

X, Temple of the sun.

Y, square towers, built by the Turks where the portico formerly stood.

Z, wall which formed the enclosure of the court of the temple.

&c. &c. &c. Sepulchres dispersed over the valley, without the walls of the city.

But I must refer the reader to the plates of Mr. Wood, for a more particular explanation of these various edifices, and to make him sensible of the degree of perfection to which the arts had arrived in those remote ages. Architecture more especially lavished her ornaments and displayed her magnificence in the temple of the sun, the tutelar deity of Palmyra. The square court which enclosed it, was six hundred and seventy nine feet each way, and a double range of columns was continued all round the inside. In the middle of the vacant space, the temple presents another front of forty-seven feet, by one hundred and twenty-four in depth. Around it
runs

runs a peristyle of one hundred and forty columns, and, what is very extraordinary, the gate faces the setting and not the rising sun. The soffit of this gate which is lying on the ground, presents a zodiac, the signs of which are the same as in ours. On another soffit is a bird similar to that of Balbec, sculptured on a ground of stars. It is a remark worthy the observation of historians, that the front of the portico has twelve pillars, like that of Balbec; but what artists will esteem still more curious is, that these two fronts resemble the gallery of the Louvre, built by Perrault, long before the existence of the drawings which made us acquainted with them; the only difference is, that the columns of the Louvre are double, whereas those of Balbec and Palmyra are detached.

Within the court of this same temple, the philosopher may contemplate a scene he will esteem still more interesting. Amid these hallowed ruins of the magnificence of a powerful and polished people, are about thirty mudwalled huts, which contain as many peasant families, who exhibit every external sign of extreme poverty. So wretched are the present inhabitants of a place once so renowned

nowned and populous! These Arabs only cultivate a few olive-trees, and as much corn as is barely necessary for their subsistence. All their riches consist in some goats and sheep they feed in the Desert; and they have no other communication with the rest of the world than by little caravans, which come to them five or six times a year from Homs, of which they are a dependency. Incapable of defending themselves from violence, they are compelled to pay frequent contributions to the Bedouins, who by turns harrafs and protect them. The English travellers inform us, " These peasants are healthy and well
 " shaped, and the few distempers they are
 " subject to, prove that the air of Palmyra
 " merits the eulogium bestowed on it by
 " Longinus, in his epistle to Porphyry. It
 " seldom rains there, except at the equinoxes,
 " which are accompanied also by those hur-
 " ricanes of sand, so dangerous in the De-
 " sert. The complection of these Arabs is
 " very swarthy from the excessive heat; but
 " this does not hinder the women from
 " having beautiful features. They are veiled;
 " but are not so scrupulous of shewing their
 " faces as the eastern women generally are;
 " they

“ they dye the end of their fingers red, (with
“ henna), their lips blue, and their eye-
“ brows and eye-lashes black; and wear
“ very large gold or brass rings in their ears
“ and noses.”

It is impossible to view so many monuments of industry and power, without wishing to be informed what age produced them, and what was the source of the immense riches they indicate; in a word, without enquiring into the history of Palmyra, and why it is so singularly situated, in a kind of island separated from the habitable earth, by an ocean of barren sands. The travellers I have quoted, have made very judicious researches into this question, but too long to be inserted here; I must again refer the reader to that work, to see in what manner they distinguish two sorts of ruins at Palmyra, one of which must be attributed to very early ages, and are only rude, unshapen masses; while the others, which are the magnificent monuments so often mentioned, are the work of more modern times. He will there see, in what manner they prove from the style of architecture, that these latter must have been erected in the three centuries preceding Dioclesian,

clefian, in which the Corinthian was preferred to every other order. They demonstrate with great ingenuity, that Palmyra, situated three days journey from the Euphrates, was indebted for its wealth and splendor to the advantage of its position on one of the great roads, by which the valuable commerce that has all times subsisted between India and Europe was then carried on; they have proved, in short, that the Palmyrenes were at the height of their prosperity, when, become a barrier between the Romans and the Parthians, they were politic enough to maintain a neutrality in their disputes, and to render the luxury of those powerful empires subservient to their own opulence.

Palmyra was at all times a natural emporium for the merchandize coming from India by the Persian Gulph, which, from thence by way of the Euphrates or the Desert, was conveyed into Phœnicia, and Asia minor, to diffuse its varied luxuries among numerous nations with whom they were always in great request. Such commerce must necessarily, in the most early ages, have caused this spot to be inhabited, and rendered it a place of importance, though at first of no great

celebrity. The two springs of fresh water (r) it possesses, were, above all, a powerful inducement in a Desert every where else so parched and barren. These doubtless were the two principal motives which drew the attention of Solomon, and induced that commercial prince to carry his arms to a place so remote from the actual limits of Judea. "He built strong walls there," says the historian Josephus (s), to secure himself in the possession, and named it Tadmour, "which signifies the Place of Palm-trees." Hence it has been inferred that Solomon was its first founder; but we should, from this passage, be rather led to conclude that it was already a place of known importance. The palm-trees he found there are not the trees of uninhabited countries. Prior to the days of Moses, the journies of Abraham and Jacob, from Mesopotamia into Syria sufficiently prove a communication between these countries, which must soon have made Palmyra

(r) These waters are warm and sulphureous, but the inhabitants who, excepting these springs, have none but what is brackish, find them very good, and they are at least wholesome.

(s) *Antiq. Jud.* lib. 8. c. 6.

flourish.

flourish. The cinnamon and pearls mentioned as found there in the time of the Hebrew legislator, demonstrate a trade with India and the Persian Gulph, which must have been carried on by the Euphrates and Palmyra. At this distance of time, when the greater part of monuments of these early ages have perished, we are liable to form very false opinions concerning the state of these countries in those remote times, and are the more easily deceived, as we admit as historical facts antecedent events, of an entirely different character. If we observe, however, that men in all ages are united by the same interests and the same desires, we cannot help concluding, that a commercial intercourse must early have taken place between one nation and another, and that this intercourse must have been nearly the same with that of more modern times. Without therefore going higher than the reign of Solomon, the invasion of Tadmour by that prince, is sufficient alone to throw a great light on the history of this city. The king of Jerusalem would never have carried his attention to so distant and detached a spot, without some powerful motive of interest, and this interest could be no other than that of

an extensive commerce, of which this place was already the emporium. This commerce extended itself to India, and the Persian Gulph was the principal point of union. Various facts concur in corroborating this last assertion; nay, necessarily force us to acknowledge the Persian Gulph as the centre of the commerce of that *Ophir*, concerning which so many false hypotheses have been framed. For, was it not in this Gulph that the Tyrians carried on a flourishing trade from the earliest ages, and are not the isles of *Tyrus* and *Aradus* sufficient proofs of the settlements they made there? If Solomon sought the alliance of the Tyrians, if he stood in need of their pilots to guide his vessels, must not the object of their voyage have been those places which they already frequented, and to which they repaired from their port of *Phœnicum oppidum*, on the Red-sea, and perhaps from *Tor*, in which name we may discover traces of that of their own city? Are not pearls, which were one of the principal articles of the commerce of Solomon, almost the exclusive produce of the coast of the Gulph, between the isles of *Tyrus* and *Aradus*, (now called *Barhain*), and *Cape Masandoum*?

Masandoum? Have not peacocks, which were so much admired by the Jews, been always supposed natives of that province of Persia which adjoins to the Gulph? Did they not procure their monkeys from Yemen, which was in their way, and where they still abound? Was not Yemen the country of Saba, (or Sheba,) the queen of which brought frankincense and gold to the Jewish king? And is not the country of the Sabeans celebrated by Strabo for producing great quantities of gold? Ophir has been sought for in India and in Africa; but is it not one of those twelve Arabian districts, or tribes mentioned in the genealogical annals of the Hebrews? And ought it not therefore to be looked for in the vicinity of the countries they inhabit, since this genealogical geography always observes a certain order of situation, whatever Bochart and Calmet may have said to the contrary? In short, do we not distinctly perceive the name of Ophir, in that of *Ofor*, a town of the district of Oman, on the pearl coast? There is no longer any gold in this country; but this is of no consequence, since Strabo positively asserts, that in the time of

the Seleucidæ, the inhabitants of Gerrha, on the road to Babylon obtained considerable quantities from it. On weighing all these circumstances, it must be admitted that the Persian Gulph was the centre of the most extensive commerce of the ancient eastern world, and that it was with a view of communicating with it by a shorter or more secure route, that Solomon turned his attention towards the Euphrates; and that, from the convenience of its situation, Palmyra must from that period have been a considerable city. We may even reasonably conjecture, when we reflect on the revolutions of the following ages, that this commerce became a principal cause of those various wars in Lower Asia, for which the barren chronicles of those early times assign no motives. If after the reign of Solomon, the Assyrians of Niniveh turned their ambitious views towards Chaldea, and the lower part of the Euphrates, it was with intention to approach that great source of opulence the Persian Gulph. If Babylon, from being the vassal of Niniveh, in a short time became her rival, and the seat of a new empire, it was because her situation rendered her the emporium

emporium of this lucrative trade; in short, if the kings of this great city waged perpetual wars with Jerusalem and Tyre, their object was not only to despoil those cities of their riches, but to prevent their invading their trade by the way of the Red-sea. An historian (*t*) who has informed us that Nabuchodonosor, before he laid siege to Jerusalem, took possession of Tadmour, clearly indicates that the latter city acted in concert with the two neighbouring capitals. Their gradual decline became, under the Persian empire, and the successors of Alexander, the efficient cause of the sudden greatness of Palmyra: in the time of the Parthians and Romans; she then enjoyed a long peace, for many centuries, which allowed her inhabitants to erect those monuments of opulence whose ruins we still admire; and they the more readily adopted this species of luxury, as the nature of the country permitted no other, and from the natural propensity of merchants, in every nation, to display their wealth in magnificent buildings. Odenatus and Zenobia carried this prosperity to its greatest height; but by at-

(*t*) John of Antioch.

tempting to exceed its natural limits, they at once destroyed the equilibrium, and Palmyra, stripped by Aurelian of the power she had acquired in Syria, was besieged, taken, and ravaged by that emperor, and lost in one day her liberty and security, which were the principal sources of her grandeur. From that period, the perpetual wars of these countries, the devastations of conquerors, and the oppressions of despots, by impoverishing the people, have diminished the commerce and destroyed the source which conveyed industry and opulence into the very heart of the Deserts: the feeble channels that have survived, proceeding from Aleppo and Damascus, serve only at this day to render her desertion more sensible and more compleat.

Leaving these venerable ruins, and returning to the inhabited world, we first meet with Homs, the Emesus of the Greeks, situated on the eastern bank of the Orontes: this place, which was formerly a strong and populous city, is, at present, only a large ruinous town, containing not more than two thousand inhabitants, partly Greeks, and partly Mahometans. An Aga resides here,
who

who holds, as a sub-renter of the Pacha of Damascus, the whole country as far as Palmyra. The Pacha himself holds this farm as an appanage deriving immediately from the Sultan. Hama and Marra are held in the same manner. These three farms pay four hundred purses, or five hundred thousand livres (above twenty thousand pounds); but they produce nearly four times that sum.

Two days journey below Homs, is Hama, celebrated in Syria for its water-works. The wheels are in fact the largest in this country, being thirty-two feet in diameter. Troughs are fastened to the circumference, and so disposed as to fall in the river, and when they reach the vertex of the wheel, discharge the water into a reservoir, whence it is conveyed by conduits to the public and private baths. The town is situated in a narrow valley on the banks of the Orontes, contains about four thousand inhabitants, and possesses some trade from its situation on the road from Aleppo to Tripoli. The soil, as throughout this whole district, is well adapted to wheat and cotton; but agriculture, exposed to the rapine of the *Motfallam* and the Arabs, is in a very languishing condition. An Arab
Shaik,

Shaik, named Mohammad-el-Korfan, is become so powerful of late years, as to impose arbitrary contributions on the country. He is supposed to be able to bring into the field thirty thousand horse-men.

Continuing to descend the Orontes, by an unfrequented route, we arrive at a marshy country, where we meet with a place interesting from the change of fortune it has undergone. This place, called Farmia, was formerly one of the most celebrated cities of Syria, under the name of Apamea. "It was there," says Strabo, "That the Seleucidæ, " had established the school and nursery of " their cavalry." The soil of the neighbourhood, abounding in pasturage, fed no less than thirty thousand mares, three hundred stallions, and five hundred elephants; instead of which the marshes of *Famia* at present scarcely afford a few buffaloes and sheep. To the veteran soldiers of Alexander, who here reposed after their victories, have succeeded wretched peasants, who live in perpetual dread of the oppressions of the Turks and the inroads of the Arabs. The same prospect is repeated on every side throughout these districts. Every town, every village is built of materials furnished

nished by ruins, and founded on the rubbish of ancient edifices. We continually meet with such ruins, both on the desert, and returning along this road, as far as the mountains of Damascus, and even as we pass to the southward of that city in the immense plains of the Hauran. The Pilgrims of Mecca, who traverse the latter for five or six days journey, assure us they find, at every step, the vestiges of ancient habitations. They are, however, less remarkable in these plains, for want of durable materials. The soil is a fine mould without stones, and almost without even the smallest pebble. What is said of its actual fertility, perfectly corresponds with the idea given of it in the Hebrew writings. Where-ever wheat is sown, if the rains do not fail, it repays the cultivator with profusion, and grows to the height of a man. The Pilgrims assert, also, that the inhabitants are stronger and taller than the rest of the Syrians. They must differ from them likewise in other respects, on account of the climate, for this part of the country is so excessively hot and dry, as to resemble Egypt more than Syria. In the desert, as they have no running waters nor wood, they make their fires with

with dung, and build huts with pounded earth and straw. They are very tawny; they pay a tribute to the Pacha of Damascus, but the greatest part of their villages put themselves under the protection of some Arab tribes; and when the Shaiks are prudent, the country prospers, and enjoys security. The mountains, however, which border on these plains to the West and North, are still more secure, on which account a number of families of the Druzes and Maronites, wearied with the troubles in Lebanon, have of late years taken refuge there, and built, *dea*, (*u*) or villages, where they freely profess their religion, and have priests and chapels. An intelligent traveller would here, no doubt, be able to make various interesting discoveries in antiquities and natural history; but no European has been hitherto known to have penetrated these recesses.

As we approach the Jordan, the country becomes more hilly and better watered; the valley through which this river flows abounds, in general, in pasturage, especially in the upper part of it. As for the river itself, it is very far from being of that importance which

(*u*) Hence the Spanish word, *aldea*.

we

we are apt to assign to it. The Arabs, who are ignorant of the name of Jordan, call it *el-Sbaria*. Its breadth, between the two principal lakes, in few places exceeds sixty or eighty feet; but its depth is about ten or twelve. In winter it overflows its narrow channel, and, swelled by the rains, forms a sheet of water sometimes a quarter of a league broad. The time of its overflowing is generally in March, when the snows melt on the mountains of the Shaik: at which time, more than any other, its waters are troubled, and of a yellow hue, and its course impetuous. Its banks are covered with a thick forest of reeds, willows, and various shrubs, which serve as an asylum for wild boars, ounces, jackals, hares, and different kinds of birds.

Crossing the Jordan, half way between the two lakes, we enter a hilly country, anciently celebrated under the name of the kingdom of Samaria, but at present called the country of *Nablous*, its capital. This town, situated near to Sichem, and on the ruins of the Neapolis of the Greeks, is the residence of a Shaik, who farms the tribute, for which he is accountable to the Pacha of Damascus, when he makes his circuit. The state of this country

country is similar to that of the Druzes, with this difference, that its inhabitants are such zealous Mahometans as not willingly to suffer any Christians among them. They are dispersed in villages among the mountains; the soil of which is tolerably fertile, and produces a great deal of corn, cotton, olives, and some silks. Their distance from Damascus, and the difficulty of invading their country, by preserving them to a certain degree from the oppressions of the government, enables them to live in more peace and happiness, than is to be found elsewhere. They are at present even supposed the richest people in Syria; which advantage they owe to their political conduct during the late troubles in Galilee and Palestine; when the tranquillity in which they lived, induced many persons of property to take refuge there. But, within the last four or five years, the ambition of certain Shaiks, encouraged by the Turks, has excited a spirit of faction and discord, the consequences of which have been almost as mischievous as the oppressions of the Pachas.

Two days journey to the south of Nablous, following the course of the mountains, which at every step become more barren and rocky, we

we arrive at a town, which, like many others already mentioned, presents a striking example of the vicissitude of human affairs: when we behold its walls levelled, its ditches filled up, and all its buildings embarrassed with ruins, we scarcely can believe we view that celebrated metropolis, which, formerly, withstood the efforts of the most powerful empires, and, for a time, resisted the arms of Rome herself; though, by a whimsical change of fortune, its ruins now receive her homage and reverence; in a word, we with difficulty recognize *Jerusalem*. Still more are we astonished at its ancient greatness, when we consider its situation, amid a rugged soil, destitute of water, and surrounded by dry channels of torrents, and steep heights. Remote from every great road, it seems neither to have been calculated for a considerable mart of commerce, nor the centre of a great consumption. It overcame however every obstacle, and may be adduced as a proof of what popular opinions may effect in the hands of an able Legislature, or when favoured by happy circumstances. The same opinions still preserve to this city its feeble existence. The renown of its miracles perpetuated in the

East, invites and retains a considerable number of inhabitants within its walls. Mahometans, Christians, Jews, without distinction of sects, all make it a point of religion to see, or to have seen, what they denominate the *noble* and *holy* city (*x*). To judge from the respect the inhabitants profess for the sacred places it contains, we should be ready to imagine there is not in the world a more devout people; but this has not prevented them from acquiring, and well deserving, the reputation of the vilest people in Syria, without excepting those even of Damascus. Their number is supposed to amount to twelve or fourteen thousand.

Jerusalem has from time to time had Governors of its own, with the title of Pachas; but it is in general, as at this day, a dependency of Damascus, from which it receives a *Motfallam*, or deputy Governor. This *Motfallam* farms it and receives the revenues arising

(*x*) The Orientals never call Jerusalem by any other name than *Elkods*, the *Holy*. Sometimes adding the Epithet *El Sherif*, the *noble*. This word *El-Kods* seems to me the etymological origin of all the *Casus* of antiquity, which like Jerusalem were *high places*, and had Temples, or *Holy-places* erected on them.

ing

ing from the Miri, the customs, and especially from the follies of the christian inhabitants. To conceive the nature of this last article, it must be understood, that the different communions of schismatic, and catholic Greeks, Armenians, Copts, Abyssinians and Franks, mutually envying each other the possession of the holy places, are continually endeavoring to outbid one another in the price they offer for them to the Turkish Governors. They are constantly aiming to obtain some privilege for themselves, or to take it from their rivals: and each sect is perpetually informing against the other for irregularities. Has a Church been clandestinely repaired; or a procession extended beyond the usual limits: has a Pilgrim entered by a different gate from that customary: all these are subjects of accusation to the Government, which never fails to profit by them, by fines and extortions. Hence those hatreds, and that eternal jangling, which prevail between the different convents; and the adherents of each communion. The Turks, to whom every dispute produces money, are, as we may imagine, far from wishing to put an end to them. They all,

in whatever station, derive some advantage from these quarrels; some sell their protection, others their interest: hence a spirit of intrigue and cabal, which has diffused venality through every class; and hence perquisites for the Motfallam, which annually amount to upwards of one hundred thousand piafters. Every Pilgrim pays him an entrance fee of ten piafters, and another for an escort for the journey to the Jordan, without reckoning the fines imposed in consequence of the imprudencies committed by these strangers during their stay. Each convent pays him so much for the privilege of processions, and so much for all repairs they undertake, besides presents on the accession of a new superior, or a new Motfallam; not to mention private gratifications to obtain secret trifles they solicit; all which is carried to a great length among the Turks, who are as well versed in the art of squeezing money as the most able law practitioners in Europe. Besides all this, the Motfallam collects duties on the exportation of certain singular commodities from Jerusalem, I mean *beads, relics, sanctuaries, crosses, passions, agnus-dei's, scapularies, &c.* of which near three hundred

chests are sent off annually. The fabrication of these utensils of piety procures subsistence for the greatest part of the Christian and Mahometan families of Jerusalem and its neighbourhood; men, women, and children are employed in carving, and turning wood and coral, and in embroidering in silk, with pearls, and gold and silver thread. The convent of the Holy-land, alone, lays out annually to the amount of fifty thousand piasters in these wares, and those of the Greeks, Armenians, and Copts, taken together, pay a still larger sum. This sort of commerce is the more advantageous to the manufacturers, as their goods cost them little beside their labour; and the more lucrative for the sellers, as the price is enhanced by superstition. These commodities exported to Turkey, Italy, Portugal, and especially to Spain, produce a return of considerable sums, either in the form of alms or payments. To this the convents join another not less important article of traffic, *the visits of the Pilgrims*. It is well known that at all times the devout curiosity of visiting the *holy places*, has occasioned Christians of every country to resort to Jerusalem. There was even a time when the

ministers of religion taught it was indispensibly necessary to salvation, and this pious zeal pervading all Europe, gave rise to the Crusades. Since their unfortunate issue, the zeal of the Europeans cooling every day, the number of pilgrims has diminished; and they are now reduced to a few Italian, Spanish, and German monks, but the case is different with the Orientals. Faithful to the spirit of past times, they continue to consider the journey to Jerusalem as a work of the greatest merit; they are even scandalized at the relaxation of the Franks in this respect, and say, they have all become heretics or infidels. Their priests and monks, who find their advantage in this fervor, do not cease to promote it. The Greeks, especially, declare that *the pilgrimage ensures plenary indulgence, not only for the past, but even for the future; and that it absolves not only from murder, incest, and pederasty; but even from the neglect of fasting and the non-observance of festivals, which are far more heinous offences.* Such great encouragements are not without their effect; and every year a crowd of pilgrims, of both sexes and all ages, set out from the Morea, the Archipelago, Constantinople,

ple, Anatolia, Armenia, Egypt, and Syria, the number of whom in 1784, amounted to two thousand. The monks, who find, by their registers, that formerly ten or twelve thousand annually made this pilgrimage, never cease exclaiming that religion rapidly decays, and that the zeal of the faithful is nearly extinguished. It must be confessed, however, that this zeal is rather expensive, since the most moderate pilgrimage never costs less than four thousand livres, (one hundred and sixty-six pounds), and some of them, by means of offerings, amount to fifty or sixty thousand, (twenty-five hundred pounds).

Yafa is the port where the pilgrims disembark. They arrive in November, and repair without delay to Jerusalem, where they remain until after the festival of Easter. They are lodged confusedly, by whole families, in the cells of the convents of their respective communions; the monks take especial care to tell them that this lodging is gratuitous; but it would be neither civil, nor very safe to depart without making an offering greatly exceeding the usual price of apartments. Besides this, it is impossible to dis-

pense with paying for masses, services, exorcisms, &c. another considerable tribute. The pilgrim must also purchase crucifixes, beads, agnus-dei's, &c. On Palm-sunday, they go to purify themselves in the Jordan, an expedition which likewise requires a contribution. One year with another, it produces to the governor fifteen thousand Turkish sequins, or four thousand six hundred and eighty-seven pounds (*y*), about one half of which is laid out in the expences of the escort, and the sums demanded by the Arabs. The reader must consult particular relations of this pilgrimage, to form an idea of the tumultuous march of this fanatic multitude into the plain of Jericho; the indecent and superstitious zeal with which they throw themselves, men, women, and children, naked into the Jordan; the fatigue they undergo before they reach the borders of the Dead-sea; the melancholy inspired by the sight of the gloomy rocks of that country, the most savage in nature; their return and visitation of the holy places; and the ceremony *of the new*

(*y*) At the rate of six shillings and three-pence the sequin.

fire.

fire, which descends from heaven on the holy Saturday, brought by an angel. The Orientals still believe in this miracle, though the Franks acknowledge that the priests retire into the Sacristy, and effect what is done by very natural means.

Easter over, each returns to his own country, proud of being able to rival the Mahometan in the title of Pilgrim (z); nay, many of them, in order to distinguish themselves as such, imprint on their hands, wrists, or arms, figures of the cross, or spear, with the cypher of Jesus and Mary. This painful, and sometimes dangerous, operation (a) is performed with needles, and the perforations filled with gunpowder, or powder of antimony, and is never to be effaced. The Mahometans have the same practice, which is also to be found among the Indians, and other savages, as it was likewise among several ancient nations with whom it had a connection with religion, which it still retains

(2) The difference between them is, that those of Mecca are called *Hadjes*, and those of Jerufalem *Mokodfi*, a name formed from that of the city, *El-Kods*.

(a) I have seen a pilgrim who had lost an arm by it, the cubital nerve being wounded in the operation.

wherever it prevails. So much devotion does not however exempt these pilgrims from the proverbial censure thrown upon the Hadjes; since the Christians say likewise: *beware of the pilgrims of Jerusalem.*

We may well suppose that so great a multitude, residing at Jerusalem for five or six months, must leave behind them considerable sums; and reckoning only fifteen hundred persons, at one hundred pistoles each, we shall find they cannot expend less than a million and a half of livres, (sixty two thousand five hundred pounds). Part of this money is paid to the inhabitants and merchants for necessities, and these lose no opportunity of imposing upon strangers. Water in 1784, cost twenty sols (ten-pence) a sack. Another part goes to the governor and his subalterns, and the remainder is the profit of the convents. Great complaints are made of the improper use the Schismatics make of this money, and their luxury is spoken of as a great scandal, their cells being ornamented with porcelain and tapestry, nay even with sabres, kandjars and other weapons. The Armenians and the Franks are much more modest; with the former, who are poor, it is a virtue of necessity;

sity; but with the latter, who are not so, it is prudence.

The convent of these Franks, called *Saint Stet*, is the principal religious house of all the Missions of the Holy Land which are in the Turkish empire. Of these they reckon seventeen, composed of Franciscans of every nation, but who are commonly French, Italian, and Spanish. The general administration is entrusted to three individuals of these nations. But so that the superior must be always a native subject of the Pope; the Agent, a subject of the Catholic king, and the Vicar, a subject of his most Christian majesty. Each of these administrators has a key of the general treasury, that the money may not be touched without common consent. Each of them is assisted by a second, called a *Discreet*: these six and a Portuguese Discreet, form together the *Directory*, or sovereign Chapter, which governs the convent and the whole order. The first founders had formerly so balanced the powers of these administrators that it was impossible for the whole to be governed by the will of one; but as all governments are subject to revolutions, some circumstances which happened

pened a few years since, have changed the nature of this. The following is a short history of the transaction.

About twenty years ago, in consequence of some irregularities incident to all great administrations, the convent of the Holy Land incurred a debt of six hundred purses, or thirty-one thousand two hundred and fifty pounds. This was daily encreasing, the expenditure continuing to exceed the receipts. It would have been an easy matter to liquidate this at one stroke, as the treasury of the holy sepulchre possesses, in diamonds, and all sorts of precious stones, in chalices, crucifixes, golden ciboires, (boxes containing the Host,) and other presents of Christian princes, to the amount of upwards of a million of livres (above forty thousand pounds) but besides the aversion which the ministers of temples have, at all times, to alienate sacred things, it might be good policy in the present case, not to shew the Turks, nor even the Christians, too great resources. The situation was embarrassing; and it became still more so from the murmurs of the Spanish agent, who loudly complained of being alone obliged to sustain the burthen of the debt, for, in fact, he it was who furnished the
most

most considerable funds. Under these circumstances, J. Ribadeira, who occupied this post, died, and chance bestowed the succession on a man, who still more impatient than himself, determined at every hazard to apply a remedy; and he set about the execution of his project with the more zeal, as he promised himself private advantages in the meditated reform. He therefore prepared his plan; and addressing himself directly to the king of Spain, by means of his confessor, represented to him:

“ That the zeal of the Christian princes
 “ having greatly cooled of late years, their
 “ ancient largesses to the convent of the Holy
 “ Land were considerably diminished; that his
 “ most Faithful Majesty had retrenched more
 “ than one half of the forty thousand dol-
 “ lars he was accustomed to bestow; that
 “ his most Christian Majesty, thinking the
 “ protection he granted sufficient, scarce-
 “ ly paid the three thousand livres he had
 “ promised; that Italy and Germany daily
 “ became less liberal, and that his Catholic
 “ Majesty was the only sovereign who con-
 “ tinued the benefactions of his predecess-
 “ sors.” He also stated, on the other hand,
 that,

that, “ the expences of the establishment
“ not having suffered a proportionable di-
“ minution, a deficiency had been incurred,
“ which rendered it necessary to have re-
“ course to an annual loan, that by this
“ means a considerable debt was contracted,
“ which daily encreasing, menaced the in-
“ stitution with final ruin; that among the
“ causes of this debt, the pilgrimage of the
“ monks who came to visit the holy places
“ must be particularly taken into account,
“ that it was necessary to defray the expences
“ of their journey, their passage by sea, their
“ tribute, and board by the convent for two
“ or three years, &c. That it so happened,
“ that the greatest part of these monks came
“ from those very states which had with-
“ drawn their bounties; that is, from Por-
“ tugal, Germany, and Italy; that it seemed
“ unreasonable for the king of Spain to pay
“ for those who were not his subjects, and
“ that it was a still greater abuse to see the ad-
“ ministration of these funds entrusted to a
“ chapter, almost wholly composed of
“ foreigners. The petitioner, insisting on
“ this last article, prayed his Catholic ma-
“ jesty to interpose in the reformation of the
“ abuses,

“ abuses, and to establish new and more equitable regulations, the plan of which he submitted, &c.”

These representations produced the desired effect. The king of Spain first declared himself *Especial Protector of the order of the Holy Land, in the Levant*; and then named the petitioner, J. Juan Ribeira, his *Royal Agent*; he gave him, in quality of this office, a seal, with the arms of Spain, and entrusted him with the sole management of his *gifts*, without being accountable to any other than himself. From that moment, J. Juan Ribeira, become a plenipotentiary, signified to the Consistory that henceforward he should have a private treasury, distinct from the common stock; that the latter should continue, as heretofore, charged with the general expences, and that, in consequence, all the contributions of the different nations should be paid in there; but as that of Spain bore no proportion to the others, he should apply no more than what was adequate to their respective contingents, retaining the surplus for his private treasury; that the pilgrimages, henceforth, should be at the expence of the nations from whence they came, except the subjects of France, the care
of

of whom he took upon himself. By this regulation, the Pilgrimages, and the greatest part of the general expences being limited, the disbursements are more proportionable to the receipts, and they have begun to pay off the debt; but the monks do not view with a favourable eye the agent thus become independent; nor can they pardon him for concentrating in himself almost as much wealth as is possessed by the whole order: for, in eight years, he has received four *conduits*, or *contributions* from Spain, estimated at eight hundred thousand dollars. The money in which these contributions are paid, consisting in Spanish dollars, is usually put on board a French ship which conveys it to Cyprus, under the care of two monks. From Cyprus, part of these dollars are sent to Constantinople, where they are sold to advantage, and converted into Turkish coin. The other part goes directly by the way of Yafa to Jerusalem, where the inhabitants expect it with as much anxiety as the Spaniards look for the galleons. The agent pays a certain sum into the general treasury, and the remainder is at his disposal. The uses he makes of it, consist, first, in a pension of three thousand livres to the French
Vicar

Vicar and his *Discreet*, who, by this means, procure him a majority of suffrages. Secondly, in presents to the governor, the Mufti, the Kadi, the Nakib, and other great officers, whose credit may be of use to him. He has likewise to support the dignity of his office, which is by no means a trifling expence; for he has his private interpreters, like a consul, his table and his Janisaries; he alone, of all the Franks, mounts on horseback in Jerusalem, and is attended by a body of cavalry; in a word, he is, next to the Motfallam, the first person in the country, and treats with the powers of it, upon a footing of equality. We may suppose, however, that so much respect is not for nothing. A single visit to Djezzar for the church of Nazareth, cost thirty thousand Pataques, (above six thousand five hundred and forty-two pounds). The Mahometans of Jerusalem who wish to profit by his riches seek his friendship. The Christians who solicit alms from him, dread even his indifference. Happy the family he selects for his favourites, and woe to the man who has the misfortune to displease him; for his hatred can display itself either by open or indirect means: a hint to the *Wali* ensures the bastinado,

nado, without the victim knowing whence it proceeds. So much power made him disdain the customary protection of the ambassador of France, and nothing but such an affair as he had lately with the Pacha of Damascus, could have reminded him that this protection is more efficacious than twenty thousand sequins. His agents, proud of his protection, abuse their authority, like all subalterns. The Spanish monks of Yafa and Ramla, treat the Christians who depend on them with a rigour which is very far from evangelical: they excommunicate them in the open church, abusing them by name; they threaten the women who have been indiscreet in talking of them; and oblige them to do public penitence, with a taper in their hands; they deliver over the intractable to the Turks, and refuse every succour to their families: in short, they offend against the customs of the country, and all decorum, by visiting the wives of the Christians, who should only be seen by their very near relations, and by remaining with them, without witnesses, in their apartments, under pretence of confessing them. The Turks are not able to conceive so much liberty without

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an abuse of it. The Christians, who are of the same opinion, murmur at it, but do no more. Experience has taught them that the indignation of the RR. PP. (reverend fathers) is attended with dreadful consequences. It is whispered, that, six or seven years ago, they procured an order from the Captain Pacha, to cut off the head of an inhabitant of Yafa who had given them some offence. Fortunately the Aga took upon himself to suspend the execution, and to undeceive the Admiral; but their animosity has never ceased to persecute this man, by every kind of chicanery. Not long ago, they solicited the English ambassador, under whose protection he has placed himself, to surrender him to a punishment, which in fact was only an unjust revenge.

Let us now quit these details, which, however, very properly describe the present situation of this country. When we leave Jerusalem, we only find three places in this part of the pachalic which merit attention.

The first is *Raba*, the ancient Jericho, situated six leagues to the north-east of Jerusalem, in a plain six or seven leagues long, by three wide, around which are a number of

barren mountains, that render it extremely hot. Here formerly was cultivated the balm of Mecca. From the description of the Hadjes, this is a shrub, similar to the pomegranate-tree, with leaves like those of rue: it bears a pulpy nut, in which is contained a kernel that yields the resinous juice which we call *balm* or *balsam*. At present there is not a plant of it remaining at Raha; but another species is to be found there, called *Zakkoun*, which produces a sweet oil, also celebrated for healing wounds. This *Zakkoun* resembles a plum-tree; it has thorns four inches long, with leaves like those of the olive-tree, but narrower and greener, and prickly at the end; its fruits is a kind of acorn, without a calix, under the rind of which is a pulp, and then a nut, the kernel of which yields an oil that the Arabs sell very dear: this is the sole commerce of Raha, which is no more than a ruinous village.

The second place deserving notice, is *Bait-el-labm*, or Bethlehem, so celebrated in the history of Christianity. This village, situated two leagues south-east of Jerusalem, is seated on an eminence, in a country full of hills and vallies,

vallies, and might be rendered very agreeable. The soil is the best in all these districts; fruits, vines, olives, and sesamum succeed here extremely well; but, as is the case every where else, cultivation is wanting. They reckon about six hundred men in this village capable of bearing arms upon occasion, and this often occurs, sometimes to resist the Pacha, sometimes to make war with the adjoining villages, and sometimes in consequence of intestine dissensions. Of these six hundred men, about one hundred are Latin Christians, who have a Vicar dependent on the great convent of Jerusalem. Formerly their whole trade consisted in the manufacture of beads; but the reverend fathers not being able to find a sale for all they could furnish, they have resumed the cultivation of their lands. They make a white wine, which justifies the former celebrity of the wines of Judea, but it has the bad property of being very heady. The necessity of uniting for their common defence prevails over their religious differences, and makes the Christians live here in tolerable harmony with the Mahometans, their fellow citizens. Both are of the

party *Yamani*, which, with its opposite called *Kaifi*, divides all Palestine into two factions, perpetually at variance. The courage of these peasants, which has been frequently tried, has rendered them formidable through all that country.

The third and last place of note is *Habroun*, or Hebron, seven leagues to the south of Bethlehem; the Arabs have no other name for this village than *El-kalil* (*b*), the *well beloved*, which is the epithet they usually apply to Abraham, whose Sepulchral grotto they still shew. Habroun is seated at the foot of an eminence, on which are some wretched ruins, the misshapen remains of an ancient castle. The adjacent country is a sort of oblong hollow, five or six leagues in length, and not disagreeably varied by rocky hillocks, groves of fir-trees, stunted oaks, and a few plantations of vines and olive-trees. These vineyards are not cultivated with a view to make wine, the inhabitants being such zealous Mahometans as not to permit any Christians to live among them: they are only of use to

(*b*) The *K* is here used for the Spanish *Iota*.

procure

procure dried raisins which are badly prepared, though the grapes are of an excellent kind. The peasants cultivate cotton, likewise, which is spun by their wives, and sold at Jerusalem and Gaza. They have also some soap manufactories, the Kali for which is sold them by the Bedouins, and a very ancient glass-house, the only one in Syria. They make there a great quantity of coloured rings, bracelets for the wrists and legs, and for the arms above the elbows (*c*), besides a variety of other trinkets, which are sent even to Constantinople. In consequence of these manufactures, Habroun is the most powerful village in all this quarter, and is able to arm eight or nine hundred men, who adhere to the faction Kaifi, and are the perpetual enemies of the people of Bethlehem. This discord, which has prevailed throughout the country,

(*c*) These rings are often more than an inch in diameter; they are passed on the arms of children, and it often happens, as I have frequently seen, that the arm growing bigger than the ring, a ridge of flesh is formed above and below, so that the ring, is buried in a deep hollow and cannot be got off, and this is considered as a beauty.

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from the earliest times of the Arabs causes a perpetual civil war. The peasants are incessantly making inroads on each other's lands, destroying their corn, dourra, sesamum, and olive-trees, and carrying off their sheep, goats, and camels. The Turks, who are every where negligent in repressing similar disorders, are the less attentive to them here, since their authority is very precarious; the Bedouins, whose camps occupy the level country, are continually at open hostilities with them, of which the peasants avail themselves to resist their authority, or do mischief to each other, according to the blind caprice of their ignorance, or the interest of the moment. Hence arises an anarchy, which is still more dreadful than the despotism which prevails elsewhere, while the mutual devastations of the contending parties render the appearance of this part of Syria more wretched than that of any other.

Proceeding from Hebron towards the west, we arrive, after five hours journey, at some eminences, which, on this side, form the last branch of the mountains of Judea. There the traveller, wearied with the rugged country

try he has quitted, views with pleasure the vast plain which extends beneath his feet, to the sea that lies before him. This is the plain which, under the name of *Falastin*, or Palestine, terminates, on this side, the country of Syria, and forms the last division concerning which it remains for me to speak.

C H A P. XXXI.

Of Palestine.

PALESTINE, in its present state, comprehends the whole country included between the Mediterranean to the west, the chain of mountains to the east, and two lines, one drawn to the south, by Kan Younes, and the other to the north, between Kaifaria and the rivulet of Yafa. This whole tract is almost entirely a level plain, without either river or rivulet in summer, but watered by several torrents in winter. Notwithstanding this dryness the soil is good, and may even be termed fertile, for when the winter rains do not fail, every thing springs up in abundance; and the earth, which is black and fat, retains moisture sufficient for the growth of grain and vegetables during the summer. More dourra sesamum, water-melons, and beans, are sown here than in any other part of the country. They also raise cotton, barley, and wheat; but though the latter be most esteemed, it is less cultivated, for fear of too much inviting the avarice of the Turkish Governors, and the rapacity

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rapacity of the Arabs. This country is indeed more frequently plundered than any other in Syria, for being very proper for cavalry, and adjacent to the Desert, it lies open to the Arabs, who are far from satisfied with the mountains: they have long disputed it with every power established in it, and have succeeded so far as to obtain the concession of certain places, on paying a tribute, from whence they infest the roads, so as to render it unsafe to travel from Gaza to Acre. They might even have obtained the entire possession of it, had they known how to avail themselves of their strength; but, divided among themselves by jarring interests, and family quarrels, they turn those weapons on each other which they should employ against the common enemy, and are at once enfeebled by their disregard of all good order and government, and impoverished by their spirit of rapacity.

Palestine, as I have said, is a district independent of every Pachalic. Sometimes it has Governors of its own, who reside at Gaza under the title of Pachas; but it is usually, as at present, divided into three appanages, or *Melkana*, viz. Yafa, Loudd, and Gaza.

The

The former belongs to the *Walda*, or Sultana Mother. The Captain Pacha has received the two others as a recompence for his services, and a reward for the head of Daher. He farms them to an Aga, who resides at Ramla, and pays him two hundred and fifteen purses for them, viz. one hundred and eighty for Gaza and Ramla, and thirty-five for Loudd.

Yafa is held by another Aga, who pays one hundred and twenty purses to the Sultana. For this he receives the whole miri and poll-tax of the town, and some adjacent villages; but the chief part of his revenue arises from the custom-house, as he receives all the duties on imports and exports. These are pretty considerable, since Yafa is the port at which the rice sent from Damietta to Jerusalem, the merchandise for a small French factory at Ramla, and the commodities from the various ports on the coast of Syria are landed. Here also the pilgrims from the Morea and Constantinople arrive; and here the spun cottons of Palestine, and other articles of trade, conveyed, by sea, along the coast, are shipped. The forces this Aga maintains, are only thirty musketeers, horse and foot, who scarcely suffice

as a guard to two wretched gates, and to keep off the Arabs.

As a sea-port, or place of strength, Yafa is not to be mentioned ; but it is capable of becoming one of the most important on the coast, on account of two springs of fresh water which are within its walls, on the sea shore. These springs enabled it to make the obstinate resistance it did in the late wars. The port, which is formed by a pier, and at present choaked up, might be cleared out, and made to contain twenty vessels of three hundred tons burthen each. At present ships are obliged to cast anchor out at sea, at near a league's distance from the shore ; where they are by no means safe, the bottom being a bank of rock and coral, which extends as far as Gaza.

Before the two late sieges, this was one of the most agreeable towns on the coast. Its environs were one continued forest of orange and lemon trees, citrons and palms, which here first begin to bear good fruit (*d*). The country beyond abounded in olive-trees, as

(*d*) We meet with some after having passed Acre, but their fruit ripens with difficulty.

large

large as walnut trees ; but the Mamlouks having cut them all down for the pleasure they take in destroying, or to make fires, Yafa has lost its greatest convenience and ornament ; fortunately it was impossible to deprive it of the rivulets that water its gardens, and nourish the young suckers, which have already begun to shoot.

Three leagues to the east of Yafa is the village of *Loudd*, the ancient *Lydda*, and *Diospolis*. A place lately ravaged by fire and sword would have precisely the appearance of this village. From the huts of the inhabitants to the Serai, or palace of the Aga, is one vast heap of rubbish and ruins. A weekly market, however, is held at Loudd, to which the peasants of the environs bring their spun cotton for sale. The poor Christians who dwell here, shew, with great veneration, the ruins of the church of St. Peter, and make strangers sit down on a column, which, as they say, that Saint once rested on. They point out the place where he preached, where he prayed, &c. The whole country is full of such traditions. It is impossible to stir a step without being shewn the traces of some apostle, some martyr, or some virgin; but what

what credit can be due to these traditions, when experience proves that the history of Ali Bey and Daher is already disputed and uncertain ?

One third of a league to the southward of Loudd, along a road lined with nopals, stands Ramla, the ancient Arimathea. This town is almost in as ruinous a state as Loudd itself. We meet with nothing but rubbish within its boundaries; the Aga of Gaza resides here in a Serai, the floors and walls of which are tumbling down. "Why," said I, one day, to one of his Sub-Agas, "does he not at least repair his own apartment?" Yes," replied he, "but if another should next year obtain his place, who would repay him the expence?"

He maintains about one hundred horsemen, and as many Barbary soldiers, who are lodged in an old Christian church, the nave of which is used as a stable, and in an ancient kan, which is disputed with them by the scorpions. The adjacent country is planted with lofty olive trees, disposed in quincunces. The greatest part of them are as large as the walnut trees of France; but they are daily perishing through age, the ravages of contending

tending factions, and even from secret mischief; for, in these countries, when a peasant would revenge himself of his enemy, he comes by night, and saws or cuts his trees close to the ground, and the wound, which he takes care to cover, draining off the sap like an issue, the olive tree languishes and dies. Amidst these plantations, we meet, at every step, with dry wells, cisterns fallen in, and vast vaulted reservoirs, which prove that, in ancient times, this town must have been upwards of a league and a half in circumference. At present it scarcely contains two hundred families. The little land which is cultivated, by a few of them, is the property of the Mufti, and two or three persons related to him. The rest content themselves with spinning cotton, which is chiefly purchased by two French houses established there. They are the last in this part of Syria, there being none either at Jerusalem or Yafa. At Ramla there is also a soap manufactory, which is almost all sent into Egypt. I must not forget to mention that the Aga built here, in 1784, the only windmill I have seen in Syria or Egypt, though they are said to have been originally invented in these countries. It was
completed

completed after the plan, and under the direction of a Venetian carpenter.

The only remarkable antiquity at Ramla is the minaret of a ruined mosque on the road to Yafa. By an Arabic inscription it appears to have been built by Saif-el-din, Sultan of Egypt. From the summit, which is very lofty, the eye follows the whole chain of mountains, which begins at Nablous, and skirting the plain, loses itself toward the south. In this plain, between Ramla and Gaza, we meet with a number of villages, badly built, of dried mud, and which, like their inhabitants, exhibit every mark of poverty and wretchedness. The houses, on a nearer view, are only so many huts, sometimes detached, and sometimes ranged in the form of cells around a court-yard, inclosed by a mud wall. The women have there, as elsewhere, separate apartments. In winter, they and their cattle may be said to live together, the part of the dwelling allotted to themselves being only raised two feet above that in which they lodge their beasts. The peasants are by this means kept warm, without burning wood; and œconomy indispensable in a country absolutely destitute of fuel.

As

As for the fire necessary for culinary purposes, they make it of dung kneaded into cakes, which they dry in the sun, exposing them to its rays on the walls of their huts. In summer their lodging is more airy, but all their furniture consist in a single mat, and a pitcher for drinking. The environs of these villages are sown at, the proper season, with grain, and water melons; all the rest is a desert, and abandoned to the Bedouin Arabs, who feed their flocks on it. At every step we meet with ruins of towers, dungeons, and castles with fossés, and sometimes a garrison, consisting of the lieutenant of an Aga, and two or three Barbary soldiers, with nothing but a shirt and a musket; but more frequently they are inhabited by jackals, owls and scorpions.

Among the inhabited places one of the principal is the village of Mefmia, four leagues from Ramla, on the road to Gaza, which furnishes a great deal of spun cotton. At the distance of a short league to the east, is a detached eminence, called for that reason *El-Tell*. It is the capital of the tribe of Wahidia, one of the Shaiks of which, named Bakir, was assassinated three years ago by the
Aga

Aga of Gaz, at an entertainment to which he had invited him. On this hill are found many remains of habitations and caverns, such as are to be met with in the fortifications of the middle ages. This must have been at all times a favourite situation, from its steepness, and the spring which is at the bottom. The channel through which it flows, is the same that loses itself near Ascalon (Ascalon.) To the east, the soil is rocky, but covered with scattered firs, olives, and other trees. Bait-djibrim, the Betha-Gabris of Antiquity is an inhabited village not quite three quarters of a league to the southward. Seven hours journey from thence toward the south-west is another village of the Bedouins, called the Hesi, which has in its neighbourhood an artificial square hill, above seventy feet high, one hundred and fifty wide, and two hundred long. The whole ascent to it has been paved, and on its summit we still find the remains of a very strong citadel.

As we approach the sea, three leagues from Ramla, on the road to Gaza, is Yabna, the ancient Jamnia. This village has nothing remarkable, but a factitious eminence like that of Hesi, and a rivulet, the only one in these districts

which does not dry up in summer. Its whole course is not more than a league and a half. Before it reaches the sea, it forms a morass called Roubin, where the country people had begun a plantation of sugar canes, which made the most promising appearance; but, after the second crop, the Aga demanded a contribution, which compelled them to desert it.

Leaving Yabna, we meet successively with various ruins, the most considerable of which are at Ezdoud, the ancient Azotus, famous at present for its scorpions. This town, so powerful under the Philistines, affords no proofs of its ancient importance. Three leagues from Ezdoud is the village of El-Majdal, where they spin the finest cottons in Palestine, which, however, are very coarse. On the right is Azkalan, whose deserted ruins are every day removing farther from the sea, by which it formerly was washed. This whole coast is daily accumulating sands, inasmuch, that many places which it is known anciently were sea ports, are now four or five hundred paces within land; of this Gaza is an example.

Gaza, called by the Arabs *Razza*, with a strong guttural pronunciation of the *r*, is composed

composed of three villages, one of which, under the name of *the Castle*, is situated between the two others, on an inconsiderable eminence. This castle, which might have been strong for the time in which it was built, is now nothing but a heap of rubbish. The Serai of the Aga, which makes a part of it, is in as ruinous a state as that of Rāmla; but it has the advantage of a most extensive prospect. From its walls, we view at once the sea, from which it is separated by a sandy beach, a quarter of a league wide, and the country, whose date trees, and flat and marked aspect, as far as the eye can discern, reminds us of Egypt; and, in fact, in this latitude, the soil and climate both appear to be truly Arabian. The heats, the drought, the winds and the dews, are the same as on the banks of the Nile; and the inhabitants have the complexion, stature, manners, and accent of the Egyptians, rather than those of the Syrians.

The situation of Gaza, by fitting it for the medium of communication between these two nations, has rendered it at all times a town of some importance. The ruins of white marble sometimes found there, prove it was formerly

merly the abode of luxury and opulence; nor was it unworthy of this preference. The black soil of the surrounding country is extremely fertile, and the gardens, watered by limpid streams, still produce, without art, pomegranates, oranges, exquisite dates, and ranunculus roots in great request, even at Constantinople. It has, however, shared in the general destruction; and, notwithstanding its proud title of the capital of Palestine, it is no more than a defenceless village, peopled by at most only two thousand inhabitants. The manufacture of cottons is their principal support; and, as they have the exclusive supply of the peasants and Bedouins of the neighbourhood, they may keep going about five hundred looms. There are likewise two or three soap manufactories. The article of ashes, or *kalis*, was formerly a considerable commerce. The Bedouins, who procured these ashes, by simply burning the plants of the desert, sold them at a reasonable rate; but since the Aga has monopolized this commodity, the Arabs, compelled to part with it at his price, are no longer anxious to collect it; and the inhabitants, constrained to purchase at his pleasure, neglect making soap. These

These ashes, however, are an object worthy of attention, from the quantity of alkali they contain.

A branch of commerce more advantageous to the people of Gaza, is furnished by the caravans which pass and repass between Egypt and Syria. The provisions they are obliged to take for their four days journey in the desert produce a considerable demand for their flour, oils, dates, and other necessaries. Sometimes they correspond with Suez, on the arrival or departure of the Dejedda fleet, as they are able to reach that place in three long days journey. They fit out, likewise, every year, a great caravan, which goes to meet the pilgrims of Mecca, and conveys to them the convoy or *Dejerda* of Palestine, and supplies of various kinds, with different refreshments. They meet them at Maon, four days journey to the south-south-east of Gaza, and one day's journey to the north of Akaba, on the road to Damascus. They also purchase the plunder of the Bedouins; an article which would be a Peru to them, were these accidents more frequent. It is impossible to ascertain the profits they made by the plunder of the great caravan in 1757. Two

thirds of upwards of twenty thousand camel loads, of which the Hadj, or caravan of pilgrims, was composed, were brought to Gaza. The ignorant and famished Bedouins, who know no value in the finest stuffs, but as they serve to cover them, sold their cashmire, shawls, callicoes, muslins, firsakes, Persian stuffs, coffee and gums, for a few piastras. We may judge from the following story, of the ignorance and simplicity of these inhabitants of the deserts. A Bedouin of Anaza having found, amongst his booty, several bags of fine pearls, took them for doura, and had them boiled to eat them; but seeing that they did not soften, was on the point of throwing them away, when an inhabitant of Gaza gave him in exchange for them a red bonnet of Faz. A similar incident happened in 1779, at the time of the pillage of the caravan which M. de St. Germain accompanied; and but the other day, in 1784, the caravan of Barbary, consisting of upwards of three thousand camels, was likewise pillaged, and the quantity of coffee dispersed by the Bedouins throughout Palestine, was so great, as to cause the price of that article to fall suddenly to one half of what it was before; and it would

would have fallen still more, had not the Aga prohibited the sale of it, in order to compel the Bedouins to deliver it all into his hands. A monopoly of this sort in the affair of 1779, produced him more than eighty thousand piaſtres. Adding theſe casualties to his other extortions, to the miri, the cuſtoms, the twelve hundred camel loads, which he purloins from the three thouſand he ſhould furniſh for the Mecca convoy, he raiſes, one year with another, a revenue of full double the hundred and eighty purſes he pays for his farm.

Beyond Gaza there are only deſerts. It muſt not, however, be underſtood, that the country becomes ſuddenly uninhabitable; we ſtill continue, for a day's journey, along the ſea coaſt, to meet with ſome cultivated ſpots and villages. Such is Kan-younes, a ſort of caſtle, in which the Mamlouks keep a gariſon of twelve men. Such alſo is El-Ariſh, the laſt place where water, which can be drank, is to be found, until you arrive at Salahia in Egypt. El-Ariſh is three quarters of a league from the ſea, in a ſandy country, as is all that coaſt. Returning to the deſert, by the eaſt, we meet with other ſtrips of cultivable

Z 4 land,

land, as far as the road to Mecca. These are little vallies, where a few peasants have been tempted to settle by the waters, which collect at the time of the winter rains, and by some wells. They cultivate palm-trees and doura, under the protection, or rather exposed to the rapine, of the Arabs. These peasants, separated from the rest of mankind, are half savages, and more ignorant and wretched than the Bedouins themselves. Incapable of leaving the soil they cultivate, they live in perpetual dread of losing the fruit of their labours. No sooner have they gathered in their harvest, than they hasten to secret it in private places, and retire among the rocks which border on the Dead Sea. This country has not been visited by any traveller, but it well merits such an attention; for, from the reports of the Arabs of Bakir, and the inhabitants of Gaza, who frequently go to Maan, and Karak, on the road of the pilgrims, there is, to the south-east of the lake Asphaltites, within three days journey, upwards of thirty ruined towns, absolutely deserted. Several of them have large edifices with columns which may have belonged to ancient temples, or at least to Greek churches.

The

The Arabs sometimes make use of them to fold their cattle in; but in general avoid them, on account of the enormous scorpions with which they swarm. We cannot be surprised at these traces of ancient population, when we recollect that this was the country of the Nabatheans, the most powerful of the Arabs; and of the Idumeans, who, at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, were almost as numerous as the Jews, as appears from Josephus, who informs us, that on the first rumour of the march of Titus against Jerusalem, thirty thousand Idumeans instantly assembled, and threw themselves into that city for its defence. It appears that, besides the advantage of being under a tolerably good government, these districts enjoyed a considerable share of the commerce of Arabia and India, which increased their industry and population. We know that, as far back as the time of Solomon, the cities of *Atfioum-Gaber* (Efion-Geber), and *Ailab* (Elloth) were highly frequented marts. These towns were situated on the adjacent gulph of the Red Sea, where we still find the latter yet retaining its name, and perhaps the former in that of *El-Akaba*, or the End (of the Sea).

These

These two places are in the possession of the Bedouins, but as they have no shipping, and carry on no kind of commerce, they do not inhabit them. The pilgrims of Cairo however report that there is at El-Akaba a wretched fort, with a Turkish garrison, and good water; an advantage truly valuable in these countries. The Idumeans, from whom the Jews only took their ports at intervals, must have found in them a great source of wealth and population. It even appears, that they rivalled the Tyrians, who also possessed a town, the name of which is unknown, on the coast of Hedjaz; in the desert of Tih, and the city of Faran, and without doubt El-Tor, which served it by way of port. From this place the caravans might reach Palestine and Judea in eight or ten days. This route, which is longer than that from Suez to Cairo, is infinitely shorter than that from Aleppo to Bassora, which requires five and thirty or forty days, and possibly in the present state of things would be the best, if the passage by Egypt should remain entirely shut up. Nothing more would be necessary, than to make an agreement with the Arabs, treaties with whom are infinitely more secure than with the Mamlouks.

The

The desert of Tih, which I have just mentioned, is that into which Moses conducted the Jews, and kept them for a whole generation, to initiate them in the art of war, and transform a multitude of shepherds into a nation of conquerors. The name *El-Tih* seems to have a reference to their history, as it signifies the Country of Wandering; but we must not imagine this to be in consequence of tradition, since the present inhabitants are foreigners, and men in all countries find it difficult to recur even to their grandfathers; the name of *El-tih* has been given to this tract by the Arabs from reading the Hebrew books and the Koran; they also call it *Barr-el-tour-Sina*, or Country of Mount-Sinai.

This desert, which is the boundary of Syria to the south, extends itself in the form of a peninsula between the two gulphs of the Red Sea; that of Suez to the west, and that of El-Akaba to the east. Its breadth is ordinarily thirty leagues, and its length seventy. This great space is almost entirely filled by barren mountains which join those of Syria, on the north, and, like them, consist almost wholly of calcareous stone: but as we advance to the southward, they

they become granitous, and Sinai and Horeb are only enormous masses of that stone. Hence it was the ancients called this country *Arabia Petrea*. The soil in general is a dry gravel, producing nothing but thorny acacias, tamarisks, firs, and a few scattered shrubs. Springs are very rare, and the few we meet with are sometimes sulphureous and thermal, as at Hammam-Faraoun, at others brackish and disagreeable, as at El Naba opposite Suez; this saline quality prevails throughout the country, and there are mines of fossil salt in the northern parts. In some of the vallies, however, the soil becoming better, as it is formed of the earth washed from the rocks, is cultivable after the winter rains, and may almost be stiled fertile. Such is the vale of Djirandel, in which there are even groves of trees. Such also is the vale of Faran, where the Bedouins say there are ruins, which can be no other than those of the ancient city of that name. In former times every advantage was made of this country that could be obtained from it (e), but at present,

(e) M. Niebuhr discovered, on a mountain, some tombs with hieroglyphics, which may induce us to believe the Egyptians had made settlements in these countries.

abandoned

abandoned to nature, or rather to barbarism, it produces nothing but wild herbs. Yet, with such scanty provision, this Desert subsists three tribes of Bedouins, consisting of about five or six thousand Arabs, dispersed in various parts. They are called by the general name of *Tawara*, or Arabs of Tor, the best known and most frequented place in the country. It is situated on the eastern side of the branch of Suez, in a sandy and low ground; as is all this coast. Its whole merit consists in a pretty good road for shipping, and water which may be drank; the Arabs also bring some thither from Sinai, which is really good. The ships of Suez lay in their provisions here when they sail to Djedda. There is nothing further to notice except that we find here a few palm-trees, the ruins of a wretched fort without a garrison, a small Greek convent, and some huts of poor Arabs, who live on fish, and serve as sailors for wages. There are also, to the southward, two small villages of Greeks, who are equally poor and miserable. As for the subsistence of the three tribes, it is derived from their goats, camels, some acacia gums sold in Egypt,

Egypt, and their robberies on the roads of Suez, Gaza, and Mecca.

These Arabs have no mares, like the other tribes, or at least they bring up very few; but they supply the want of them by a sort of camel, which they call *Hedjina*. This animal is of the same shape with the common camel, with this difference, that he is made much more slender, and moves quicker. The ordinary camel only goes a foot pace, and measures his steps so slowly, that he hardly advances thirty-six hundred yards an hour; the *Hedjina*, on the contrary, trots at pleasure, and, from the length of his paces, easily goes two leagues an hour. The great advantage of this animal is to be able to continue this pace thirty or forty hours successively, almost without rest, and without eating or drinking: he is made use of by couriers, and for long journeys which require expedition; if he has once got the start by four hours, the swiftest Arabian mare never can overtake him; but one must be accustomed to his pace, otherwise his jolting motion soon flays the skin and disables the best rider, in spite of the cushions with which they

they stuff the saddle. All that we have heard of the swiftness of the Dromedary, may be applied to this animal. He has however only one bunch; nor do I recollect, out of five and twenty of thirty thousand camels, I may have seen in Syria and Egypt, ever to have observed a single one with two.

But the most considerable profits of the Bedouins of Tor arise from the pilgrimage of the Greeks to the convent of Mount Sinai. The schismatics have so much faith in the relics of saint Catherine, which they say are deposited there, that they doubt of their salvation if they have not visited them at least once in their lives. They repair thither even as far as from the Morea, and Constantinople. The rendezvous is at Cairo, where the monks of Mount Sinai have correspondents who treat with the Arabs for a convoy. The ordinary price is twenty-eight pataques, (six pounds two and six-pence) each passenger, exclusive of provisions. On their arrival at the convent, the Greeks perform their devotions, visit the church, kiss the relics and images, mount on their knees more than one hundred steps of the hill of Moses, and conclude by making an offering, the value of which

which is not fixed, but rarely amounts to less than fifty pataques (*f*).

Except at the time of these visitations, which only are made once a year, this convent is the most desert and savage abode in nature. The adjacent country is nothing but a pile of rugged and naked rocks. Mount Sinai, at the foot of which it is seated, is a peak of granite which seems to overwhelm it. The house is a sort of square prison, whose lofty walls have only one window, which, though very high up, serves likewise by way of door; for, to enter this convent, you must get into a basket, which the monks leave suspended at the window, and occasionally hoist up with ropes. This precaution arises from their fear of the Arabs, who might force the convent if the usual entrance was by a door: they never open the

(*f*) To these pilgrims we must attribute the inscriptions and clumsy figures of asses, camels, &c. engraven on these rocks, which have from thence acquired the name of *Djebel Mokattab*, or written Mountain. *Mr. Wortley Montague*, who travelled a great deal in these countries, and carefully examined these inscriptions, is of this opinion, *M. Cour de Gebelin*, author of *Le Monde Primitif*, has lost his labour, in endeavouring to discover some mysterious meaning.

Only one there is, except on a visit from the bishop, at all other times it is kept closely shut. This visitation should take place every two or three years; but as it necessarily occasions a considerable contribution for the Arabs, the monks evade it as much as possible. They do not, however, so easily escape the daily distribution of a certain quantity of provisions; and the quarrels which arise, on this subject, frequently draw on them a shower of stones, and even musket-shot from the discontented Bedouins. They never stir into the country; but, by dint of labour, have made a garden, on the rocks, with earth they have brought thither, which serves them to walk in. They cultivate excellent fruit there, such as grapes, figs, and especially pears, of which they make presents, and which are highly esteemed at Cairo, where they have no such fruit. Their domestic life is the same with that of the Greeks and Maronites of Lebanon, that is, it is entirely devoted to useful works, or to religious duties. But the Monks of Lebanon enjoy the inestimable advantage of liberty and security, which is not possessed by those of Sinai. In other respects, this confined and melancholy state

of existence is that of all the monks, in the Turkish empire. Thus live the Greeks of Mar-Simeon to the north of Aleppo, and of Mar-Saba on the Dead-sea; this also is the life of the Copts in the manasteries of Saint Macarius, and Saint Anthony in the desert. Every where their convents are prisons, with no other light than a window by which they receive their victuals; and every where are they built in dismal places, destitute of whatever can give pleasure, and where nothing is to be found but rocks and stones, without either grass or moss; and yet they are full of monks: there are fifty at Sinai, five and twenty at Mar Saba, and upwards of three hundred in the two Deserts of Egypt. I one day enquired the reason of this, in a conversation with one of the superiors of Mar-hanna, and asked him, “What could induce men to engage in a
“mode of life so truly miserable?” “What,” said he, “are not you a Christian? Is not this the path which leads to heaven?”—“But,” replied I, “We may also obtain salvation
“without renouncing the world; (and between ourselves, father,) I do not perceive
“that the monks, though they are pious,
“possess

“ possess that ancient fervour which through-
 “ out life, kept its attention fixed on the hour
 “ of death.” “ It is true,” said he, “ we
 “ have no longer the austerity of the ancient
 “ Anchorites, and in reality this is one rea-
 “ son why our convents are so full. You
 “ who come from a country where men live
 “ in security and abundance, may consider our
 “ life as an insupportable self-denial, and our
 “ retreat from the world as a sacrifice. But,
 “ in the situation of this country, perhaps,
 “ the case is different. What can we do?
 “ Turn merchants! We should then be over-
 “ whelmed with the cares of business and
 “ our families, and, after having worked hard
 “ for thirty years, comes the Aga, the
 “ Pacha, or the Cadi; we are brought to
 “ trial without even the shadow of a crime;
 “ witnesses are suborned to accuse us; we
 “ are bastinadoed, plundered, and turned
 “ into the world as naked as the first day
 “ we entered it. As for the peasant, his
 “ case is still worse, the Aga oppresses him,
 “ the soldier pillages him, and the Arabs
 “ rob him. Shall we become soldiers? The
 “ profession is laborious and dangerous, and
 “ how it will end not very certain. It may
 A a 2 “ seem

“ seem hard perhaps to shut ourselves up
“ in a convent; but, at least, we live there in
“ peace, and, though in a state of habitual
“ abstinence and poverty, we perhaps possess
“ and enjoy more than we should if we had
“ continued in the world. Observe the
“ situation of the peasants, and look at ours.
“ We possess every thing they have, and even
“ what they have not; we are better clad,
“ and better fed; we drink wine and coffee:
“ and who are our monks but the children
“ of peasants? You talk of the Copts of
“ Saint Macarius and Saint Anthony! Be
“ assured their condition is much better than
“ that of the Bedouins and Fallahs who sur-
“ round them.”

I own I was astonished at so much frankness, and just reasoning; but I felt, more forcibly than ever, that the human heart is moved by the same springs, in every situation. The desire of happiness is every where the motive, whether sought in hope or actual enjoyment. The discourse of this monk may suggest many other reflections, and shew how far the spirit of retirement from the world is connected with the
state

state of any Government; and from what causes and under what circumstances it must originate, be predominant, or decline. But I shall now conclude this geographical view of Syria, and resume, in a few words, what I have said of its revenues and forces, to enable the reader to form a compleat idea of its political state.

CHAP. XXXII.

Political state of Syria resumed.

SYRIA may be considered as a country composed of three long strips of land of different qualities: one of these, extending along the Mediterranean, is a warm, humid valley, the healthiness of which is doubtful, but which is extremely fertile; the other, which is the frontier of this, is a mountainous and rugged soil, enjoying a more salubrious temperature; the third, which lies behind the mountains to the east, combines the dryness of the latter with the warmth of the former. We have seen by what a happy combination of the properties of climate and soil this province unites in a small compass the advantages and productions of different zones, inasmuch, that nature seems to have designed it for one of the most agreeable habitations of this continent. It may be reproached, however, like almost all hot countries, with wanting that fresh and animated verdure which almost perpetually adorns our fields; we see there none of that gay carpeting of grass and flowers which decorate the meadows

dows of Normandy and Flanders, nor those clumps of beautiful trees which give such richness and animation to the landscapes of Burgundy and Brittany. As in Provence, the land of Syria has almost always a brown and parched aspect, which is only enlivened here and there by firs, mulberry-trees, and vineyards. This defect is less the fault of nature, possibly, than that of art; had not these countries been ravaged by the hand of man, they might perhaps at this day have been shaded with forests. Thus much is certain, and it is the advantage of hot over cold countries, that in the former, wherever there is water, vegetation may be perpetually maintained and made to produce an uninterrupted succession of fruits to flowers, and flowers to fruits. In cold, nay even in temperate climates, on the contrary, nature benumbed for several months, loses in a sterile slumber the third part, or even half the year. The soil which has produced grain, has not time, before the decline of the summer heat, to mature vegetables; a second crop is not to be expected, and the husbandman sees himself condemned to a long and fatal repose. Syria, as we have seen, is exempt from these inconveniences;

if therefore it so happens, that its productions do not correspond with its natural advantages, this is less owing to its physical than political state. To fix our ideas on this head, let us resume, in a few words, what we have already explained in detail of the revenues, forces, and population of the province.

From the state of the contributions of each pachalic, it appears, that the annual sum paid by Syria into the *Kasna*, or Treasury of the Sultan, amounts to two thousand three hundred and forty-five purses, viz.

For Aleppo	-	-	800	Purses
Tripoli	-		750	
Damascus	-		45	
Acre	-	-	750	
Palestine	-		—	
			<hr/>	
Total			2345	
			<hr/>	

Which are equal to 2,931,250 livres.
(122,135*l.* 8*s.* 4*d.*)

To this sum must be added, first, the casual inheritance of the fortunes of the Pachas, and of individuals, which may be estimated at one thousand purses, annually; secondly, the poll tax paid by the Christians, called
 4 *Karadji*,

Karadij, which is almost every where distinct from the other taxes, and is accountable directly to the Kasna. This capitation does not take place in the countries which are sub-let, as those of the Maronites and Druzes, but is confined to the *Rayas*, or immediate subjects. The Capitation tickets are from three and five, to eleven piastres a head. It is difficult to estimate the total produce, but allowing one hundred and fifty thousand to pay the tax, at the mean rate of six piastres, we have the sum of 2,250,000 livres; and we cannot be far from the truth, if we compute the total of the Sultan's revenue from Syria, to be 7,500,000 livres, (312,500*l*.)

Let us now estimate what the country produces to those who farm it, and we shall have

For Aleppo	-	2,000 Purfes
Tripoli	-	2,000
Damascus	-	10,000
Acre	-	10,000
Palestine	-	600
		<hr/>
Total		24,600

Which

Which make 30,750,000 livres, (1,281,250*l.*) This sum must be considered as the least we can allow for the produce of Syria, the profits of the Sub-Farms, such as the countries of the Druzes, the Maronites, the Ansarians, &c. not being included.

The military establishment is by no means proportionable to what in Europe we should expect from such a revenue; all the troops of the Pachas united cannot amount to more than 5,700 men, both cavalry and infantry, viz.

	<i>Cavalry</i>	<i>Natives of Barbary.</i>
For Aleppo	= 600	= 500
Tripoli	- 500	- 200
Acre	- 1,000	- 900
Damascus	1,000	- 600
Palestine	- 300	- 100
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	3,400	2,300
	<hr/>	<hr/>

The constant forces of the country then consist in three thousand four hundred cavalry, and two thousand three hundred Barbary infantry. It is true, that, in extraordinary cases, these

are joined by the Janisaries, and that the Pachas enlist vagabond volunteers from every quarter, which form those sudden armies we have seen collected in the wars of Daher and Ali Bey: but the sketch I have given of the military skill of these armies, and the discipline of such troops; may convince us, that Syria is still worse defended than Egypt. We must, however, allow the Turkish soldiers two inestimable good qualities; a frugality which enables them to subsist in the most exhausted country, and a bodily health capable of enduring the greatest fatigues. This is the effect of the hardships to which they are inured by their manner of living. Continually on horseback, and in the field, lying on the earth, and sleeping in the open air, they do not experience that contrast between the luxurious life of cities, and the fatigue of camps, which is so fatal to the soldiers of polished nations.

Syria and Egypt, compared with respect to the facility with which they may be attacked or defended, differ almost in every point. Egypt is protected from a foreign enemy on the land side by her deserts, and on that of the sea by her dangerous coast,

coast. Syria, on the contrary, is open on the side of the continent by the Diarbekar, and exposed also on that of the Mediterranean by a coast every where accessible. It is easy to make a descent in Syria, but very difficult to land in Egypt: Egypt once invaded is conquered: Syria may resist; Egypt when conquered is extremely difficult to keep, and easily lost; Syria is so easily defended, it is impossible it should be lost. Less skill is necessary to conquer one, than to preserve the other. The reason is, that Egypt being a country of plains, the invader there makes a rapid progress; every movement brings on a battle, and every battle is decisive; Syria, on the contrary, being a mountainous country, war there must be a war of posts, and every loss may be repaired.

The subject of population, which remains to be discussed, is infinitely more difficult than the two preceding ones. Calculations of this kind can only be made from analogies always liable to error. The best way will be to compute from two extremes, the populousness of which is pretty well known. The part of the country which is best peopled,

pled, is that of the Maronites and Druzes, and gives nine hundred inhabitants for each square league, which computation will also serve for the countries of Nablous, Husbeya, Adjaloun, the territory of Damascus, and some other places. The other, which is the least populous, is that of Aleppo, which gives from three hundred and eighty to four hundred inhabitants to each square league, which estimation will suit the greater part of Syria. Calculating from these materials by a method too tedious to explain here, it appears to me that the total population of Syria may be estimated at 2,305,000 souls, viz.

For the Pachalic of Aleppo	-	320,000
that of Tripoli, not including the Kefraouan	- -	200,000
the Kefraouan	- -	115,000
the country of the Druzes		120,000
the Pachalic of Acre	-	300,000
Palestine	- - -	50,000
the Pachalic of Damascus		1,200,000

Total 2,305,000

Let

Let us suppose it two millions and a half, and since Syria contains about five thousand two hundred and fifty square leagues, at the rate of one hundred and fifty in length, and thirty-five in breadth, we shall have upon an average four hundred and seventy-six inhabitants for every square league. So feeble a population in so excellent a country, may well excite our astonishment, but this will be still encreased if we compare the present number of inhabitants, with that of ancient times. We are informed by the philosophical geographer, Strabo, that the territories of Jamnia and Joppa in Palestine, alone, were formerly so populous, as to be able to bring forty thousand armed men into the field. At present they could scarcely furnish three thousand. From the accounts we have of Judea in the time of Titus, and which are to be esteemed tolerably accurate, that country must have contained four millions of inhabitants; but at present, there are not, perhaps, above three thousand. If we go still farther back into antiquity, we shall find the same populousness among the Philistines, the Phœnicians, and in the kingdoms of Samaria and Damascus. It is true that some writers,

writers, reasoning from what they see in Europe, have called in question these facts ; several of which, indeed, appeared to be disputable ; but the comparisons on which they build, are not on that account the less erroneous ; first, because the lands of Asia in general are more fertile than those of Europe ; secondly, because a part of these lands are capable of being cultivated, and in fact are cultivated, without lying fallow or requiring manure ; thirdly, because the Orientals consume one half less for their subsistence than the inhabitants of the western world, in general ; for all which reasons it appears, that a territory of less extent may contain double and treble the population. These authors exclaim against the armies of two and three hundred thousand, furnished by states, which in Europe would not produce above twenty or thirty thousand ; but it is not considered that the constitutions of ancient nations were wholly different from ours ; that these nations were entirely cultivators ; that there was less inequality, and less idleness than among us ; that every cultivator was a soldier ; that in war, the army frequently consisted of the whole

whole nation, and, in a word; that their state was that of the present Maronites and Druzes. Not that I wish to appear an advocate for those rapid populations, which from a single man, are made to pour forth in a few generations, numerous and powerful nations; in these relations there are a multitude of mistakes in words, and errors of Copyists; but admitting only what is conformable to experience and nature, there is nothing to contradict the great population of high antiquity: without appealing to the positive testimony of history, there are innumerable monuments which depose in favour of the fact. Such are the prodigious quantities of ruins dispersed over the plains, and even in the mountains, at this day deserted. On the most remote parts of Carmel are found wild vines and olive-trees, which must have been conveyed thither by the hand of man; and in the Lebanon of the Druzes and Maronites, the rocks now abandoned to fir-trees and brambles, present us in a thousand places with terraces, which prove they were anciently better cultivated, and consequently much more populous than in our days.

It

It now only remains for me, to collect the general facts scattered through this work, and those I may have omitted, in order to form a complete description of the political, civil, and moral state of the inhabitants of Syria.

C H A P. XXXIII.

Government of the Turks in Syria.

THE reader must already have been convinced from what has been said, that the government of the Turks in Syria is a pure military despotism ; that is, that the bulk of the inhabitants are subject to a faction of armed men, who dispose of every thing according to their interest or caprice. To form a more perfect conception of the spirit with which this faction governs, it will be sufficient to consider by what title they claim possession.

When the Ottomans, under Sultan Selim, took Syria from the Mamlouks, they considered the country only as the spoil of a vanquished enemy ; as a possession acquired by the law of arms and war. Now, according to this law, among barbarous nations, the vanquished is wholly at the discretion of the victor, he becomes his slave ; his life, his property, belong to his conqueror ; he may dispose of all as master, he owes his captive nothing, and grants what he leaves him as a favour. Such was this law among the Greeks and Romans,

Romans, and among all those societies of robbers whom we have honoured with the name of conquerors. Such, at all times, was that of the Tartars, from whom the Turks derive their origin. On these principles, even their first social state was formed. In the plains of Tartary, the hordes, separated by their different interests, were no other than bands of robbers, armed for attack or defence, and to seize, as fair booty, whatever they might covet. Already, all the elements of their present state were formed; continually wandering and encamped, they were at once shepherds and soldiers; each horde was an army; now, in an army, laws are but the orders of the chief, they are absolute, and admit of no delay, they must proceed from one will, and from a single head: hence, a supreme authority in him who commands; and, a passive submission in him who obeys. But as in the transmission of these orders, the instrument becomes an agent in his turn, the consequence is, a spirit at once imperious and servile, which is precisely that exhibited by the Turkish conquerors. Proud, after their victory, of being one of the conquering people, the meanest of

the Ottomans treated the most illustrious of the vanquished with the lofty superiority of a master ; and this spirit diffusing itself through every rank, we may judge of the distance from whence the Supreme Chief looks down upon the croud of slaves beneath him. The sentiments he conceives of them cannot be better pourtrayed than in the formulary of the titles assumed by the Sultans in their public acts : “ I,” say they, in their treaties with the kings of France, “ I, who, “ by the infinite grace of the great, just, “ and omnipotent Creator, and by the “ innumerable miracles of the Chief of Prophets, am Emperor of Powerful Emperors, “ the Refuge of Sovereigns, the Distributor of “ Crowns to the Kings of the Earth, Servant of the two thrice sacred Cities, (Mecca “ and Medina), Governor of the Holy City “ of Jerusalem, Master of Europe, Asia, “ and Africa, conquered by our victorious “ Sword, and our terrific Lance, Lord of “ the Two Seas, (the White and Black “ Seas), of Damascus, the Odour of Paradise, “ of Bagdad the seat of the Caliphs, of the “ Fortresses of Belgrade, Agria, and a multitude of Countries, Islands, Straights, “ Nations,

“ Nations, Generations, and of so many
 “ victorious armies, which repose beneath the
 “ shade of our Sublime Porte; I, who am
 “ *the Shadow of God on Earth, &c.*”

From such exalted grandeur, how must the Sultan look down on the rest of mankind? In what light must he view that earth which he possesses, and distributes, but as a domain of which he is absolute master? What must the people he has subdued appear, but slaves devoted to his service; and what the soldiers he commands, but servants by whose means he retains these slaves in obedience? Such is the real character of the Turkish government. This empire may be compared to a plantation in one of our Sugar Islands, where a multitude of slaves labour to supply the luxury of one Great Proprietor, under the inspection of a few servants who take good care of themselves. There is no difference, except that the dominions of the Sultan being too vast for a single administration, he is obliged to divide them into smaller plantations, and separate governments, administered in the same mode as the united empire. Such are the provinces under the government of the Pachas. These

B b 3 provinces

provinces again being too extensive, the Pachas have had recourse to further subdivision, and hence that series of subalterns, which, step by step, descends to the lowest employments. In this gradation of authority, the object in view being invariably the same, the means employed never change their nature. Thus, power being absolute and arbitrary in the monarch, is transmitted absolute and arbitrary to all his sub-delegates. Each of these is the exact image of his next superior. It is still the Sultan who dictates and commands, under the varied names of *Pacha*, *Motfallam*, *Kaiem-Makam* and *Aga*, nor is there one in this descending scale, even to the *Delibashe*, who does not represent him. It is curious to hear with what insolence the lowest of these soldiers, giving his orders in a village, pronounces; *It is the will of the Sultan; it is the Sultan's pleasure*. The reason of this insolence is easily explained: for the bearer of the orders of the Sultan becomes himself, for that moment, the Sultan. It is not difficult to conceive what must be the consequence of such an administration, since all experience invariably proves, that moderation is the most difficult of virtues; and since even those
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men who preach it most fervently, frequently neglect to practise it; how numerous must be the abuses of unlimited power in the great, who are strangers both to forbearance and to pity, in upstarts proud of authority and eager to profit by it, and in subalterns continually aiming at greater power? Let us judge therefore, how far certain speculative writers are justified in insinuating, that despotism in Turkey is not so great an evil as we imagine, since, from its only residing in the person of the sovering, it can alone affect the great by whom he is immediately surrounded. It is certain, to use the expression of the Turks, *that the sabre of the Sultan does not descend upon the dust*; but this sabre he entrusts to the hand of his Vizir, who delivers it to the Pacha, from whom it passes to the Mofsallam, to the Aga, and even to the lowest Delibashe; so that it is, in fact, within the reach of the vilest retainer to office, and its destructive edge descends even on the meanest heads. This erroneous reasoning arises from the state of the people at Constantinople, to whom the Sultan is more attentive than to those of the provinces; but this attention, which his own personal safety renders necessary there, is paid

to no other part of the empire; and, even there, it may be said to be attended with disagreeable effects; for, if Constantinople is in want of provisions, ten provinces are furnished for a supply. Yet, which is of most importance to the empire, the capital or the provinces? in case of war, by which must soldiers be furnished, and by which fed? To the provinces therefore must we look to discover the real effects of despotism, and, in Turkey, as every where else, we must be convinced that arbitrary power in the sovereign is fatal to the state, as from the sovereign it must necessarily devolve upon his subalterns, and become more abused the lower it descends; since it is a maxim verified by constant experience, that the slave, become master, is the most rigorous of Tyrants. Let us now examine the abuses of this administration, as far as it respects Syria.

In each government, the Pacha, being the image of the Sultan, is, like him, an absolute despot. All power is united in his person; he is chief both of the military and the finances, of the police and criminal justice. He has the power of life and death; he has the power of making peace and war; in a word, he
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can do every thing. The main object of so much authority is to collect the tribute, that is, to transmit the revenue to the great proprietor who has conquered, and who possesses the country by the right of his *terrific lance*. This duty fulfilled, no other is required from him; the means employed by the agent to accomplish it is a matter of no concern; those means are left to his discretion; and such is the nature of his situation, that he cannot be delicate in his choice of them; for he can neither advance, nor even maintain himself, but in proportion as he can procure money. The place he holds depends on the favour of the Visir, or some other great officer; and this can only be obtained and secured by bidding higher than his competitors. He must therefore raise money to pay the tribute, and also to indemnify himself for all he has paid, support his dignity, and make a provision in case of accidents. Accordingly, the first care of a Pacha, on entering on his government, is to devise methods to procure money, and the quickest are invariably the best. The established mode of collecting the miri and the customs, is to appoint one or more principal

principal farmers, for the current year, who, in order to facilitate the collection, divide it into lesser farms, which are again subdivided, even to the smallest villages. The Pacha lets these employments to the best bidder, wishing to draw as much money from them as possible. The farmers, who, on their side have no object in taking them but gain, strain every nerve to augment their receipt. Hence an avidity in these delegates always bordering on dishonesty; hence those extortions to which they are the more easily inclined as they are sure of being supported by authority; and hence, in the very heart of the people, a faction of men interested in multiplying impositions. The Pacha may applaud himself for penetrating into the most hidden sources of private profits, by the clear-sighted rapacity of his subalterns; but what is the consequence? The people, denied the enjoyment of the fruit of their labour, restrain their industry to the supply of their necessary wants. The husbandman only sows to preserve himself from starving; the artist labours only to support his family; if he has any surplus, he carefully conceals it. Thus the arbitrary power of the Sultan, transmitted to the Pacha,

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and to all his subdelegates, by giving a free course to extortion becomes the main spring of a tyranny which circulates through every class, whilst its effects, by a reciprocal reaction, are every where fatal to agriculture, the arts, commerce, population; in a word, every thing which constitutes the power of the state, or, which is the same thing, the power of the Sultan himself.

This power is not subject to less abuses in the army. Perpetually urged by the necessity of obtaining money, on which his safety and tranquillity depend, the Pacha has retrenched, as far as possible, the usual military establishment. He diminishes the number of his troops, lessens their pay, winks at their disorders; and discipline is no more. Were a foreign war now to happen, were the Russians to appear again in Syria, as in the year 1772, who would defend that province for the Sultan?

It sometimes happens that the Pachas, who are Sultans in their provinces, have personal hatreds against each other. To gratify these, they avail themselves of their power, and wage secret or open war, the ruinous consequences of which are sure to be felt by the subjects of the Sultan,

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It also happens that these Pachas are tempted to appropriate to themselves the power of which they are the depositaries. The Porte, foreseeing this, endeavours to provide against their defection, by various means. The employments are divided, and particular officers maintained in the castles of the capitals, as at Aleppo, Damascus, and Tripoli; but should a foreign enemy appear, what benefit would result from this division? Every three months Capidjis are sent, who keep the Pachas in alarm, on account of the secret orders of which they are the bearers; but not unfrequently the Pachas, as cunning as themselves, get rid of these troublesome spies. The Porte, in short, often changes the residence of the Pachas, that they may not have time to form connections in the country; but as all the consequences of a bad form of government have a mischievous tendency, the Pachas, uncertain of to-morrow, treat their provinces as mere transient possessions, and take care to make no improvement for the benefit of their successors. On the contrary, they hasten to exhaust them of the produce, and to reap in one day, if possible, the fruit of many years. It is true, these irregularities, every now and then,

then, are punished by the bowstring, one of the practices of the Porte which best displays the spirit of his government. When a Pacha has laid waste a province; when, in consequence of repeated acts of tyranny, the clamours of the people have reached Constantinople, woe be unto him if he be without a protector, or sparing of his money! At the end of the year, a Capidji arrives, producing the firman of prorogation: sometimes bringing with him a second or third tail, or some other new mark of favour; but, whilst the Pacha is celebrating a festival on the occasion, an order appears for his deposition, then another for his exile, and frequently a kat-shef for his head. The ostensible reason is always for having oppressed the subjects of the Sultan: but the Porte, by taking possession of the wealth of the extortioner, and restoring nothing to the people, leaves sufficient room to think that the government is far from disapproving a system of robbery and plunder which it finds so profitable. Every day, therefore, affords fresh examples of oppressive and rebellious Pachas; and if none of them have hitherto succeeded in forming a stable and independent government, it is less owing to these wise measures of the Divan,

Divan, and the vigilance of the Capidjis, than their own ignorance in the art of governing. In Asia, those moral means are never employed, which, in the hands of able legislators, have frequently raised powerful states on foundations at first extremely feeble. The Pachas regard nothing but money; nor has repeated experience been able to make them sensible that this, so far from being the pledge of their security, becomes the certain cause of their destruction. They are wholly devoted to amassing wealth, as if friends were to be purchased. Asa, Pacha of Damascus, left eight millions of livres (above three hundred and thirty thousand pounds), and was betrayed by his Mamlouk, and smothered in the bath. We have seen what was the fate of Ibrahim Sabbar with his twenty millions. Djezzar is following the same course, and will end in the same way. Not one of them has ever thought of inspiring and promoting that disinterested love of the public welfare, which in Greece and Italy, nay, even in Holland and Switzerland, has enabled the lower classes of people to enter into a successful contest with the greatest empires. The Emirs and Pachas all imitate the Sultan: all re-
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gard the country they govern as their private property, and their subjects as their domestics; while they, in their turn, see in their superiors only imperious masters; and since they are all alike, of what importance is it which they serve? Hence, in these states, the custom of employing foreign in preference to national troops. The chiefs are distrustful of the people, conscious that they do not merit their attachment; their aim is not to govern but to tyrannize over the country, and by a just relation, their country sees their ruin with indifference. The mercenaries, too, whom they keep in pay, continually intent on their own interest, sell them to the enemy, to profit by their spoils. Daher had maintained for ten years the wretch, who murdered him. It is a truth worthy of remark, that the greater part of the African and Asiatic states, especially since the days of Mahomet, have been governed on these principles, and that no part of the world has exhibited so many commotions in its provinces, or revolutions in its empires. Ought we not then to conclude, that arbitrary power in the sovereign is no less fatal to the military strength, than the finances of a nation? But let us proceed to

to enquire what are its effects on the civil government of Syria.

The Pacha, as being the image of the Sultan, is the head of all the police of his government; under which title must be comprehended criminal justice. He possesses the most absolute power of life and death, and this he exercises without formality, and without appeal. Wherever he meets with an offence, he orders the criminal to be seized, and the executioner, by whom he is accompanied, strangles him, or takes off his head upon the spot; nay, sometimes, he himself does not disdain this office, Three days before my arrival at Sour, Djeddar had ripped up a Mason with an axe. The Pacha frequently strolls about disguised, and woe to the man whom he surprizes in a fault! But as he cannot be present every where, he commits this duty to a deputy, called the *Wali*, whose office resembles that of the *Officiers de Guet* in France. Like them he patrols night and day; keeps a watchful eye on the seditious; apprehends robbers; and like the Pacha, judges and condemns without appeal. The criminal bends his neck; the executioner strikes; the head falls, and the body is carried

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fied off in a leathern sack. This officer has a multitude of spies, who are almost all of them thieves, and by their means knows every thing that passes. It is not, therefore, astonishing that cities like Cairo, Aleppo, and Damascus, should be safer than Genoa, Rome, or Naples; but how dearly is this safety purchased! and how many innocent lives are sacrificed to the partiality and injustice of the Wali and his agents!

The Wali presides likewise over the police of the markets; that is, he inspects the weights and measures; and, on this head, his severity is extreme. For the smallest deficiency in the weight of bread, meat, *debs*, or confectionary, he inflicts five hundred strokes of the bastinado, and, sometimes, even death. Examples of this are frequent in the great cities, yet there is no country wherein false weights are more common; all the dealer has to do is to keep a sharp look-out for the passing of the Wali, and Mohteseb, or inspector of the market. As soon as they appear on horseback, the deficient weights are put out of the way, and others produced. The dealers also bargain with the servants who precede

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these two officers ; and for a certain sum can ensure impunity.

The office of Wali by no means extends to those various objects of utility which are under the regulation of our police. No attention is paid either to the cleanliness or the salubrity of the cities. They are never paved, swept, or watered, either in Syria or in Egypt. The streets are narrow and winding, and almost always encumbered with rubbish. Travellers are, above all, shocked at the sight of a multitude of hideous dogs, which have no owner. They form a sort of independent body, subsisting on public alms. They are quartered by families and districts, and should one of them happen to pass his limits, a combat ensues, which is extremely troublesome to passengers. The Turks, who shed the blood of man so readily, do not kill these dogs, though they avoid touching them as unclean. They pretend they ensure the safety of the cities by night ; but this is more owing to the Wali, and the gates with which every street is secured. It is alleged, likewise, that they devour the carrion ; but in this they are assisted by a great number of jackalls, which are concealed by
hundreds

hundreds in the gardens, and among the ruins and tombs. We must not expect either walks or plantations in the Turkish cities. In such a country, life, doubtless, will appear neither secure nor agreeable; but this also is the consequence of the arbitrary power of the Sultan.

C H A P. XXXIV,

Of the Administration of Justice.

TH E administration of justice in civil suits, is the only species of authority which the Sultans have withheld from the executive power of the Pachas; whether, from a sense of the enormous abuses which might result from entrusting them with it, or from knowing that it required more time and information than fall to the share of these their deputies. Other officers are appointed for this purpose, who, by a wise regulation, are independent of the Pachas; but as their jurisdiction is founded on the same principles with the rest of the government, it is attended with the same inconveniencies.

All the magistrates of the empire, called *Cadis*, or judges, depend on one principal chief, who resides at Constantinople. The title of his dignity is *Cadi-el-askar*. (*g*), or Judge of the Army; which title alone indicates, as I have already observed, that the power is entirely military, and resides wholly in the army and its general. This grand Cadi

(*g*) Commonly called *Cadi Lefkier*.

names

names the judges of the capital cities, such as Aleppo, Damascus, Jerusalem, &c. These judges again name others in the places within their jurisdiction. But what is the qualification required? Always money. All these employments, like those of the government, are sold to the best bidder, and farmed in the same way from year to year. What is the consequence? That the farmers endeavour to recover the money advanced; to obtain interest, and also a profit. What therefore can we expect from such dispositions in men who hold the balance of justice in their hand, and decide on the property of their fellow citizens?

The tribunal whence these Cadis issue their decisions, is called the *Mahkama*, or Place of Judgment. Sometimes it is at their own houses; but never at any place which corresponds with the idea annexed to so sacred an employment. In an empty mean apartment, the Cadi is seated on a mat or wretched carpet. On each side of him are his clerks and some domestics. The door is open to every body; the parties appear; and there, without interpreters, advocates, or attornies, each pleads his own cause. Squatted

on the ground, they state the facts, dispute, contest, and reply again in their turns. Sometimes the debates are violent ; but the cries of the clerks, and the staff of the Cadi, soon restore order and silence. Gravely smoking his pipe, and twisting the end of his beard round his finger, this judge listens, interrogates, and concludes by pronouncing a sentence without appeal, which at most allows but two months delay. The parties are never very well satisfied ; they retire, however, with respect, and pay a fee, estimated at one tenth of the litigated property, without murmuring at the decision, as it is invariably dictated by the *infallible Koran*.

It must be owned this simplicity of justice, which does not consume the property, either in preliminary, accessory, or subsequent expences ; and this proximity of the sovereign tribunal, which does not compel the pleaders absence from his place of residence, are two inestimable advantages ; but it cannot be denied that they are counterbalanced by too many abuses. In vain have some writers, to render more conspicuous the vices of our legal customs, boasted the administration of justice among the Turks. These commendation s

recommendations, founded on a superficial knowledge of the theory of Mahometan jurisprudence, are not justified, when we consider what is actually practised. Daily experience proves, that there is no country wherein justice is more corrupted than in Egypt, Syria, and, no doubt, all the rest of the Turkish empire (*b*). Venality is no where more open, nor more impudent. The parties may bargain for their cause with the Cadi, as they would for any common commodity. Instances of great sagacity and equity, no doubt, are to be found; but they are rare, which is the very reason why they are so celebrated. Corruption is habitual and general; and how is it possible to be otherwise, where integrity may be ruinous, and injustice lucrative; where each Cadi, deciding without appeal, fears neither a revision of his sentence, nor punishment for his partiality; and where, in short, the want of clear and precise laws, afford a thousand ways of avoiding the shame of an evident injustice, by opening the crooked paths of commentaries and interpretations?

(*b*) See, on this subject, the observations of Sir James Porter, the English minister at Constantinople.

Such is the state of jurisprudence among the Turks, that there exists no public and acknowledged code, where individuals may instruct themselves in their respective rights. The judgments given are, in general, founded on unwritten *customs*, or on the frequently contradictory *decisions* of the Doctors. The collections of these decisions are the only books wherein the judges can acquire any notions of their duty; and in them they find only particular cases more calculated to confound than enlighten their ideas. The Roman law, in many particulars, has served as a basis for the determinations of the Mahometan Doctors; but the great and inexhaustible source to which they recur, is the *most pure book*, the *depository of all knowledge*, the *code of all legislation*, the *Koran of the Prophet*.

C H A P.

C H A P. XXXV.

Of the influence of religion.

IF the object of religion among the Turks were such as it ought to be among all nations; did it teach the great, moderation in the exercise of their power, and the vulgar, toleration amid the diversity of opinions, it would still be a matter of doubt whether it could sufficiently correct the vices of which we have been speaking; since the experience of all men proves that the principles of morality only influence conduct, so far as they are seconded by civil laws. But nothing can be worse calculated to remedy the abuses of government than the spirit of *Islamism*: we may on the contrary, pronounce it to be their original source. To convince himself of this, the reader has only to examine their revered book. In vain do the Mahometans boast that the Koran contains the seeds and even the perfection of all political and legislative knowledge, and jurisprudence: nothing but the prejudice of education, or the partiality of interest can dictate, or admit such a
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judgment. Whoever reads the Koran, must be obliged to confess, that it conveys no notion, either of the relative duties of mankind in society, the formation of the body politic, or the principles of the art of governing; nothing, in a word, which constitutes a legislative code. The only laws we find there may be reduced to four or five ordinances relative to polygamy, divorces, slavery, and the succession of near relations; and even these form no code of jurisprudence, but are so contradictory, that they cannot be reconciled by the altercations of the doctors. The rest is merely a chaos of unmeaning phrases; and emphatical declamation on the attributes of God, from which nothing is to be learnt; a collection of puerile tales, and ridiculous fables; and, on the whole, so flat and fastidious a composition, that no man can read it to the end, notwithstanding the elegance of M. Savary's translation. But should any general tendency or semblance of meaning be visible through the absurdities of this delirious effusion, it is the inculcation of a fierce and obstinate fanaticism. We are wearied with the perpetual recurrence of the words *impious, incredulous, enemies*

enemies of God and the Prophet; rebels against God and the Prophet; devotion towards God and the Prophet. Heaven is open to whomsoever combats in their cause; *Houris* stretch out their arms to martyrs; the imagination takes fire, and the profelyte exclaims, "Oh Mahomet; thou art the messenger of God; thy word is his; he is infallible; thou canst neither err nor deceive me: go on, I follow thee." Such is the spirit of the Koran, and it is visible in the very first line. "There is no uncertainty in this book; it guides without error those who believe without doubting, who believe in what they do not see." What is the tendency of this, but to establish the most absolute despotism in him who commands, and the blindest devotion in him who obeys? and such was the object of Mahomet. He did not wish to enlighten men, but to rule over them; he sought not disciples, but subjects; and obedience, not reasoning is required from subjects. It was to lead them the more easily that he ascribed all to God. By making himself his minister, he removed every suspicion of personal interest; and avoided alarming that distrustful vanity which is common to all men; he feigned to obey that he

he might exalt obedience; he made himself but the first of servants, with a certainty that every man would strive to be the second, and command the rest. He allured by promises, and terrified by menaces; and as every novelty is sure to meet with opponents, by holding out the terrors of his anathemas, he left them the hope of pardon. Hence in some passages we find an appearance of toleration; but this toleration is so rigid, that sooner or later, it must lead to absolute submission; so that in fact the fundamental spirit of the Koran continually recurs, and the most arbitrary power is delegated to the messenger of God, and by a natural consequence to his successors. But by what kind of precepts is the use of this power manifested? “There is only one
“God, and Mahomet is his prophet. Pray
“five times a day turning towards Mecca.
“Eat not in the day time during the whole
“month of the Ramadan. Make the pilgrimage of the Caaba, and give alms to the
“widow and orphan.” Here is the profound source from whence must spring all the sciences, and every branch of political and moral knowledge. The Solons, the Numas, the Lycurguses; all the Legislators of antiquity have

have in vain exhausted their genius to explain the relations of mankind in society, to declare the duties and rights of every class, and every individual: Mahomet more able or more profound than they, resolves all into five phrases. It certainly may be safely asserted, of all the men who have ever dared to give laws to nations, none was more ignorant than Mahomet; of all the absurd compositions ever produced, none is more truly wretched than his book. Of this, the transactions of the last twelve hundred years in Asia are a proof; for were I inclined to pass from particular to general observations, it would be easy to demonstrate, that the convulsions of the governments, and the ignorance of the people, in that quarter of the globe, originate more or less immediately in the Koran, and its morality; but I must confine myself to the country we are now considering, and returning to Syria, explain to the reader, the state of its inhabitants, relative to religion.

The people of Syria in general, as I have already said, are Mahometans or Christians: this difference of opinion is productive of the
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most disagreeable effects in their civil state. Treating each other mutually as rebels, infidels, and impious, the followers of Jesus Christ and Mahomet, are actuated by a reciprocal aversion which keeps alive a sort of perpetual war. We may readily conceive the excesses to which the prejudices of education may carry the vulgar, at all times violent; and the government so far from interposing as a mediator in these dissensions, fomented them by its partiality. Faithful to the spirit of the Koran, it treats the Christians with a severity, which displays itself in varied forms. Mention has been sometimes made of the toleration of the Turks; the following is the price at which it is purchased:

All kind of public worship is prohibited the Christians, except in the Kesraouan, where the government has not been able to prevent it. They cannot build any new churches; and if the old ones fall to decay, they are not allowed to repair them, unless by a permission which costs them very dear. A Christian cannot strike a Mahometan without risk of his life, but if a Mahometan kill a Christian, he escapes for a stipulated price.

price. Christians must not mount on horseback in the towns; they are prohibited the use of yellow slippers, white shawls, and every sort of green colour. Red for the feet, and blue for the dress, are the colours assigned them. The porte has just renewed its ordinances to re-establish the ancient form of their turbans; they must be of a coarse blue muslin, with a single white border. When they travel, they are perpetually stopped at different places to pay *Kafars(i)*, or tolls, from which the Mahometans are exempt: in judicial proceedings, the oath of two Christians is only reckoned for one; and such is the partiality of the Cadis, that it is almost impossible for a Christian to gain a suit; in short, they alone are subject to the Capitation, called *Karadji*, the ticket of which bears these remarkable words: *Djazz-el-ras*, that is (redemption) *from cutting off the head*; a clear proof of the title by which they are tolerated and governed.

These distinctions, so proper to foment hatred and divisions, are disseminated among the people, and manifest themselves in all the intercourse of life. The meanest Ma-

(i) The *K* here is a guttural *k*.

hometan

hometan will neither accept from a Christian, nor return the salute of *Salam-alai-k* (*k*), health to thee, on account of the affinity between the word *Salam* and *Eslam*, (Islamism), the proper name of their religion, and *Moslem*, (Mussulman) the name of the person who professes it: the usual salutation is only good morning, or good evening, and it is well too, if it be not accompanied with a *Djaour*, *Kafer*, *Kelb*, i. e. impious, infidel, dog, expressions to which the Christians are familiarized. The Mahometans even affect to mortify them, by practising before them the ceremonies of their worship. At noon, at three o'clock, and at sun-set, as soon as the criers from the tops of the minarets announce the time of prayer, they appear at the doors of their houses, where, after making their ablution, they gravely spread a mat or carpet, and turning themselves towards Mecca, cross their arms upon their breasts, stretch them towards their knees, and begin nine prostrations, down to the ground, reciting the preface to the Koran. In conversation, they frequently make a break

(*k*) Or, *Salam-alai-Kom*, health to you. Hence the word *Salamalek*.

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by their profession of faith, "There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet." They talk perpetually of their religion, and consider themselves as the only *faithful* to God. To confute them, the Christians, in their turn, affect great devotion; and hence that ostentation of piety which forms one of the principal characteristics of the Orientals; but the heart makes no sacrifice, and the Christians retain a deep remembrance of all these insults, and only wait a favourable opportunity to seek their revenge. The effects of this were visible in the time of Daher, when, proud of the protection of his minister, in many places they assumed a superiority over the Mahometans. The excesses they committed on that occasion should serve as a lesson to any European power, which may hereafter obtain possession of countries inhabited by Greeks and Mahometans.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Of property, ranks, and conditions.

THE Sultans having arrogated to themselves, by right of conquest, the property of all the lands of Syria, the inhabitants can no longer pretend to any real, or even personal property; they have nothing but a temporary possession. When a father dies, the inheritance reverts to the Sultan, or his delegate, and the children can only redeem the succession by a considerable sum of money. Hence arises an indifference to landed estates, which proves fatal to agriculture. In the towns, the possession of houses is in some measure less uncertain and less ruinous; but every where the preference is given to property in money, as more easy to hide from the rapine of the Despot. In the tributary countries, such as those of the Druzes, the Maronites, Hasbeya, &c. there exists a real property, founded on customs which their petty princes dare not violate; on which account the inhabitants are so attached to their estates, that it is very rare
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to hear of an alienation of lands among them. There is nevertheless one method, even under the Turkish government, of securing a perpetual *usufruct*, which is by making what is called a *Wakf*, that is an endowment or donation of an estate to a Mosque. The proprietor then becomes the irremovable guardian of his property, on condition of a fine, and under the protection of the professors of the law; but this act has this inconvenience, that instead of protecting, the men of the law frequently devour the property; and in that case, to whom are they to look for redress, since the embezzlers of the property are at the same time the distributors of justice? For this reason, these lawyers are almost the only landholders, nor do we see, under the Turkish government, that multitude of small proprietors, who constitute the strength and riches of the tributary countries.

What I have said of conditions in Egypt, will apply equally to Syria: they may be reduced to four or five; the cultivators or peasants, artisans, merchants, military men, and those who fill the different departments of the law and juridical offices. These various classes

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again may be comprehended under two others : the people, which includes the peasants, artisans, and merchants ; and the government composed of the military, and legal and judicial officers. According to the principles of their religion, the power should reside in the latter order ; but since the dispossession of the Caliphs by their lieutenants, a distinction has taken place between the spiritual and temporal power, which has left only the shadow of authority to the interpreters of the law : Such is that of the Grand Mufti (1), who represents the Caliph, among the Turks. The real power is in the hands of the Sultan, who represents the lieutenant, or general of the army. That favourable prejudice, however, which the people entertain for dethroned powers, still preserves to professors of the law, a credit, of which they almost always avail themselves, to form a *party of opposition* ; the Sultan is awed by it at Constantinople, nor do the Pachas venture too openly to thwart it in their provinces. In each city this party is headed by the Mufti, who derives his authority from that

(1) This term signifies *Decider* of the cases which concern religion.

of Constantinople; his employment is hereditary and not venal, which single circumstance has preserved more energy in this body than in all the others. From the privileges they enjoy, the families which compose it bear a considerable resemblance to our nobility, although its true type be the army. They resemble also our magistracy, our clergy, and even our citizens, as they are the only persons in that country who live on their rents. From them to the peasantry, the artisans, and traders, the descent is sudden, yet, as the condition of these three classes form the true standard of the police and power of an empire, I shall select the particulars best calculated to enable the reader to form just ideas.

C H A P. XXXVII.

State of the Peasants and of Agriculture.

IN Syria, and even throughout the Turkish empire, the peasants, like the other inhabitants, are deemed *slaves* of the Sultan; but this term only conveys the meaning of our word *subjects*. Though master of their lives and properties, the Sultan does not sell men; he does not limit them to a certain spot. If he bestows an apanage on some grandee, it is not said, as in Russia and Poland, that he gives five hundred or a thousand peasants; in a word, the peasants are oppressed by the tyranny of the government, but not degraded by feudal servitude.

When Sultan Selim had conquered Syria, in order to render the collection of the revenue more easy, he established a single territorial tribute called the *miri*. It should seem, that this Sultan, notwithstanding the ferocity of his character, understood the importance

portance of favouring the Husbandman, for the miri, compared with the extent of the lands, is an infinitely moderate impost; and it was the more so at the time in which it was fixed, as Syria was then better peopled than at present, and perhaps also possessed a greater trade, as it lay on the most frequented route to India, little use having been yet made of the passage by the Cape of Good Hope. That this tax might be collected regularly, Selim gave orders to prepare a *defter*, or register, in which the contingent of each village should be set down. In short, he established the miri, at an invariable rate, and ordered it should neither be augmented nor diminished. Moderate as it was in its original establishment, it could never be oppressive to the people; but by abuses inherent in the constitution of the Turkish government, the Pachas and their agents have found the secret of rendering it ruinous. Not daring to violate the law established by the Sultan respecting the immutability of the impost, they have introduced a multitude of changes, which, without the name, produce all the effects of an augmentation. Thus, having

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the greatest part of the land at their disposal, they clog their concessions with burthen some conditions; they exact the half, nay even two thirds, of the crop; they monopolize the seed and the cattle, so that the cultivators are under the necessity of purchasing from them at their own price. The harvest over, they cavil about losses, and pretended robberies, and as they have the power in their hands, they carry off what they think proper. If the season fails, they still exact the same sum, and to pay themselves, expose every thing the poor peasant possesses to sale. Happily, his person at least remains free, for the Turks are ignorant of the refinement of imprisoning for debt the man who has no longer any property. To these constant oppressions are added a thousand accidental extortions. Sometimes the whole village is laid under contribution for some real or imaginary offence; and sometimes a service of a new kind is introduced. A present is exacted on the accession of each governor; a contribution of grass is demanded for his horses, and barley and straw for his cavaliers: they must provide, likewise, for all the

the soldiers who pass, or who carry orders, and the governors take care to multiply these commissions which are a saving to them, but inevitable ruin to the peasants. The villages tremble at every *Lawend* who appears; he is a real robber under the name of a soldier; he enters as a conqueror, and commands as a master: *Dogs, Rabble; bread, coffee, tobacco; I must have barley, I must have meat.* If he casts his eyes on any poultry, he kills them; and when he takes his departure, adding insult to tyranny, he demands what is called *kera-el-dars*, the hire of his grinders. In vain do the peasants exclaim against this injustice; the sabre imposes silence. Justice is remote and difficult of access; nay, complaints are even dangerous. What is the consequence of all these depredations? The poorer class of inhabitants ruined, and unable any longer to pay the *miri*, become a burthen to the village, or fly into the cities: but the *miri* is unalterable, and the sum to be levied must be found somewhere, their portion falls on the remaining inhabitants, whose burthen, though at first light, now becomes insupportable. If they are visited by a two years drought

drought and famine, the whole village is ruined and abandoned; but the tax it should have paid is levied on the neighbouring lands. They proceed in the same manner with the *Karadji* of the Christians. Its amount having been estimated at the time they were first numbered, it must always produce the same, though those who pay should be less numerous. Hence it happens that this capitation is sometimes carried from three, five and eleven piasters, at which it was first fixed, to thirty-five and forty; which absolutely impoverishes those on whom it is raised, and obliges them to leave the country. These burthens are more especially oppressive in the countries bestowed as an appanage, and in those which are exposed to the Arabs. In the former, the Titulary, greedy to augment his revenue, delegates full power to his Lessee to augment the taxes, and he is well seconded by the avidity of the subalterns. These men, refining on the arts of wringing money from the people, have contrived to impose duties on every commodity brought to market, on entries, the conveyance of goods, and even the burthen of an
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als. It is remarked that these exactions have made a rapid progress, especially in the last forty years, from which time they date the decline of agriculture, the depopulation of the country, and the diminution in the quantity of specie carried to Constantinople. With respect to the Bedouins, if they are at war, they pillage as enemies; and if at peace, devour every thing they can find as guests; hence the proverb, *Avoid the Bedouin, whether friend or enemy.* The least wretched of the peasants, are those of the countries which raise themselves a certain stipulated sum, as is done by the Druzes, the Kefraouan, Nablous, &c. yet even there they are liable to be oppressed and impoverished by various abuses. But nothing is more destructive to Syria, than the shameful and excessive usury customary in that country. When the peasants are in want of money to purchase grain, cattle, &c. they can find none but by mortgaging the whole, or part, of their future crop, greatly under its value. The danger of letting money appear closes the hands of all by whom it is possessed; and if it is parted with it must be from the

the hope of a rapid and exorbitant gain; the most moderate interest is twelve per cent. the usual rate is twenty, and it frequently rises as high even as thirty.

From all these causes we may easily conceive how miserable must be the condition of the peasants. They are every where reduced to a little flat cake of barley or dourra, to onions, lentils, and water. They are so little acquainted with dainties, that they esteem strong oil, and rancid fat as delicacies. Not to lose any part of their corn, they leave in it all sorts of wild grain, even tares (*m*), which occasion vertigoes, and dimness of sight for several hours, as I have myself experienced. In the mountains of Lebanon and Nablous, in time of dearth, they gather the acorns from the oaks, which they eat, after boiling or roasting them on the ashes. The truth of this has been authenticated to me among the Druzes, by persons who have themselves made use of them. We must therefore no longer accuse the poets of hyperbole; but it will only be the more dif-

(*m*) In Arabic *Ziwan*,

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difficult to believe that the golden age was the age of abundance.

By a natural consequence of this misery, the art of cultivation is in the most deplorable state; the husbandman is destitute of instruments, or has very bad ones; his plough is frequently no more than the branch of a tree, cut below a bifurcation, and used without wheels. The ground is tilled by asses, and cows, rarely by oxen; they would bespeak too much riches; beef is therefore very scarce in Syria and Egypt, where, besides, it is always lean and bad, like all the meat of hot countries. In the districts exposed to the Arabs, as in Palestine, the countryman must sow with his musket in his hand. Scarcely does the corn turn yellow, before it is reaped, and concealed in *Matmoures*, or subterraneous caverns. As little as possible is employed for seed corn, because they sow no more than is barely necessary for subsistence; in a word, their whole industry is limited to a supply of their immediate wants; and to procure a little bread, a few onions, a wretched blue shirt, and a bit of woollen

woollen much labour is not necessary. The peasant lives therefore in distress; but at least he does not enrich his tyrants, and the avarice of despotism is its own punishment.

C H A P. XXXVIII.

Of the Artisans, Traders, and Commerce.

THE class of men who give value to commodities, by manufacturing them, or bringing them into circulation, is not so ill treated in Syria, as that which produces them; the reason of which is, that the property of the artisans and traders, consisting in personal effects, is more concealed from the scrutinizing eye of government than that of the peasants; besides which, the artists and merchants, collected in the towns, escape more easily, in the crowd, from the rapacity of their rulers. This is one of the principal causes of the populousness of the towns in Syria and even throughout Turkey. While in other countries, the cities are in some measure the overflow of the country, there they are the effect of its desertion. The peasants, expelled from their villages, fly thither for refuge, and find in them tranquillity and even a degree of ease and plenty.

plenty. The Pachas are more particularly attentive to this last article, as on it depends their personal safety; for besides the immediate effects of a sedition, which might be fatal to them, the Porte would not pardon them for endangering the safety of the empire, for want of supplying the people with bread. They take care therefore to keep provisions cheap in all the principal towns, and especially in that in which they reside: if there be a dearth, it is always least felt there. In case of a failure in the harvest, they prohibit the exportation of grain, and oblige every person who possesses any, to sell it at the price they fix under pain of death; and if there be none in the province, they send for it to other countries, as was the case at Damascus in November 1784. The Pacha placed guards on all the roads, permitted the Arabs to pillage every carriage going out of the country, and sent orders into the Hauran, to empty all the *Matmoures*, so that while the peasants were dying with hunger in the villages, the people of Damascus paid for their bread but two paras, or two sols and a half, (one penny farthing), the French pound, and thought it dear even at that

that price; but as in the political machine no part is independent of the rest, it was not possible to give such a mortal wound to agriculture, without its being felt by the arts and commerce. The reader will judge from a few details, whether the government be not as negligent in this as in every other particular.

Commerce in Syria, considered as to the manner in which it is carried on, is still in that state of infancy which characterizes barbarous ages and uncivilized countries. Along the whole coast there is not a harbour capable of admitting a vessel of four hundred tons, nor are the roads secured by forts. The Maltese corsairs formerly availed themselves of this want of vigilance, to make prizes close in with the shore; but as the inhabitants made the European merchants responsible for such accidents, France has obtained from the order of Malta a prohibition to their corsairs from appearing within sight of land; so that the natives may peaceably carry on their coasting trade, which is tolerably brisk, from Latakia to Yafa. In the interior parts of the country, there are neither great roads nor canals, nor even bridges over the greater part

of the rivers and torrents, however necessary they may be in winter. Between town and town, there are neither posts nor public conveyance. The only convenience of this kind is the *Tartar* courier, who comes from Constantinople to Damascus, by way of Aleppo. This courier has no relays but in the large towns, at very great distances; but in case of need he may dismount the very first horseman he meets. He leads with him, according to the custom of the Tartars, a second horse in hand, and has frequently a companion for fear of accidents.

The communication between one town and another is maintained by carriers, who have no fixed time of departure. This arises from the absolute necessity of forming troops, or caravans; nobody travels alone, from the insecurity of the roads. One must wait for several travellers who are going to the same place, or take advantage of the passage of some great man, who assumes the office of protector, but is more frequently the oppressor of the caravan. These precautions are, above all, necessary in the countries exposed to the Arabs, such as Palestine, and the whole frontier of the desert, and even on the road from Aleppo to Skanderoon, on account of the Curd robbers. In
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the mountains, and on the coast, between Latakia and Carmel, we may travel with more safety; but the roads in the mountains are extremely bad, as the inhabitants are so far from levelling them, they endeavour to render them more rugged, in order, as they say, to cure the Turks of their desire to introduce their cavalry.

It is remarkable, that we never see either a waggon or a cart in all Syria; which arises, no doubt, from the apprehension of having them seized by the minions of government, and suffering a great loss at one stroke. Every thing is conveyed on the backs of mules, asses, or camels; all which animals are excellent here. The two former are employed in the mountains, and nothing can equal their address in climbing and sliding over the slopes of the craggy rocks. The camel is more made use of in the plains, because he consumes less, and carries more. His usual burthen is about seven hundred and fifty pounds. His food is every thing you chuse to give him; straw, brambles, pounded dates, beans, barley, &c. With a single pound of food, and as much water in a day, he will travel for weeks together. In the whole way from

Cairo to Suez, which is a journey of forty or forty-six hours, including the time allowed for rest, they neither eat nor drink; but these fastings, repeated, exhaust them as well as other animals. Their breath then becomes foetid. Their ordinary pace is very slow, not exceeding thirty-four or thirty-six hundred yards in an hour. It is needless to press them, they go no quicker; but by allowing them to rest, they will travel from fifteen to eighteen hours a day.

There are no inns any where; but the cities, and commonly the villages, have a large building called a *Kan*, or *Kervan-ferai*, which serves as an asylum for all travellers. These houses of reception are always built without the precincts of the towns, and consist of four wings round a square court, which serves by way of inclosure for the beasts of burden. The lodgings are cells, where you find nothing but bare walls, dust, and sometimes scorpions. The keeper of this *Kan* gives the traveller the key and a mat; and he provides himself the rest. He must, therefore, carry with him his bed, his kitchen utensils, and even his provisions; for frequently not even bread is to be found in the villages. On this account
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the Orientals contrive their equipage in the most simple and portable form. The baggage of a man who wishes to be completely provided, consists in a carpet, a matrafs, a blanket, two faucepans with lids, contained within each other; two dishes, two plates, and a coffee-pot, all of copper, well tinned; a small wooden box for salt and pepper; six coffee cups, without handles, in a leathern box; a round leathern table, which he suspends from the saddle of his horse; small leathern bottles, or bags for oil, melted butter, water and brandy, (if the traveller be a Christian) a pipe, a tinder-box, a cup of cocœanut, some rice, dried raisins, dates, Cyprus cheese, and above all, coffee-berries, with a roaster, and wooden mortar to pound them. I am thus particular to prove, that the Orientals are more advanced than we, in the art of dispensing with many things; an art which is not without its use.

Our European merchants are not contented with such simple accommodations. Their journeys, therefore, are very expensive, and consequently not frequent; but even the richest natives of the country make no difficulty in passing part of their lives in the manner I

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have described, on the roads of Bagdad, Basfora, Cairo, and even of Constantinople. Travelling is their education, their science; and to say of any man he is a merchant, is to pronounce him a traveller. They find in it the advantage of purchasing their goods at the first hand, procuring them at a cheaper rate, ensuring their safety by escorting them themselves; preventing many accidents, and obtaining some abatement of the numerous tolls. They learn, in short, to understand weights and measures, the extreme diversity of which renders theirs a very complicated profession, since each town has its peculiar weight, which, under the same denomination, differs from that of another. The *Rotle* of Aleppo weighs about six pounds, Paris weight; that of Damascus five and one quarter; that of Saide less than five; that of Ramla near seven. The *Derbem* alone, that is the drachm, which is the first element of these weights, is the same every where. The long measures vary less; only two are known, the Egyptian cubit (*Draa Masri*), and the cubit of Constantinople (*Draa Stambouli*).

Coin is still more fixed; and you may travel over the whole empire from Kotchim to Asouan,

Afouan, without experiencing any change in its denomination or its value. The most simple of these coins is the *Para*, called also a *Medin*, a *Fadda*, a *Kata*, or a *Mefria*. It is of the size of an English silver threepence, and is only worth five liards (a little above a halfpenny). After the para, follow successively pieces of five, ten, and twenty paras; then the *Zolata*, or *Islote*, which is worth thirty; the *Piaftre*, called *Kerfsh-asadi*, or Piaftre of the Lion, worth forty paras, or fifty French sols (two shillings and a penny); and which is most generally used in commerce; and, lastly, the *Abou-Kelb*, or Piafter of the Dog, which is worth sixty paras. All these coins are silver, but with such a mixture of copper alloy, that the abou-kelb is as large as a crown of six livres, though its value be only four livres five sols (Three and sixpence halfpenny). They bear no image, because of the prohibition of the Prophet, but only the cypher of the Sultan on one side, and on the other these words: *Sultan of the two Continents*, *Kakan* (n), (i. e. Lord) of the two Seas, the Sultan, Son of the Sultan N.

(n) *Kakan* is a Tartarian word.

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struck at Stamboul, (Constantinople), or at *Mafr* (Cairo); which are the only two cities where there is a mint.

The gold coins are the sequin, called *Dabab*, or piece of gold; and also *Zabr-Mahaboub*, or Well-beloved Flower. It is worth three piastres of forty paras, or seven livres ten sols (six shillings and three-pence); the half sequin is only worth sixty paras. There is likewise a sequin, called *Fondoucli*, which is worth one hundred and seventy paras; but it is very rare. Besides these coins, which are those of the whole Turkish empire, some of the European specie has as much currency; such are the silver Dollars of Germany, and the gold sequins of Venice. The dollars are worth in Syria from ninety to ninety-two paras, and the sequins from two hundred and five to two hundred and eight. These two coins are worth from eight to ten paras more in Egypt. The Venetian sequins are in great request from the fineness of their standard, and the practice they have of employing them for womens trinkets. The fashion of these trinkets does not require much art; the piece of gold is simply pierced, in order to suspend it by a chain, likewise of gold, which
flows

flows upon the breast. The more sequins there are attached to this chain, and the greater the number of these chains, the more is a woman thought to be ornamented. This is the favourite luxury, and the emulation of all ranks. Even the female peasants, for want of gold, wear piastres or smaller pieces ; but the women of a certain rank disdain silver ; they will accept of nothing but sequins of Venice, or large Spanish pieces, and crusadoes. Some of them wear two or three hundred, as well lying flat, as strung one on another, and hung near the forehead, at the edge of the head-dress. It is a real load : but they do not think they can pay too dearly for the satisfaction of exhibiting this treasure at the public bath, before a croud of rivals, to awaken whose jealousy constitutes their chief pleasure. The effect of this luxury on commerce, is the withdrawing considerable sums from circulation, which remain dead ; besides, that when any of these pieces return into common use, having lost their weight by being pierced, it becomes necessary to weigh them. The practice of weighing money is general in Syria, Egypt, and all Turkey. No piece, however effaced, is refused there ; the merchant

chant draws out his scales and weighs it, as in the days of Abraham, when he purchased his sepulchre. In considerable payments, an agent of exchange is sent for, who counts paras by thousands, rejects pieces of false money, and weighs all the sequins, either separately or together.

Almost the whole commerce of Syria is in the hands of the Franks, Greeks, and Armenians : formerly it was engrossed by the Jews. The Mahometans take little part in it ; not that they are prevented from engaging in it by the prejudices of their religion, or by indolence, as some political writers have imagined ; but from the obstacles thrown in their way by their own government. The Porte, constant to its usual system, instead of giving a decided preference to the Turkish subjects, finds it more lucrative to sell their rights and industry to foreigners. Some of the European states have, by treaties, obtained a diminution of custom-house duties to three *per cent.* while the merchandise of the subjects of the Sultan pays strictly ten, or, when favoured, seven *per cent.* Besides this, the duties once paid in any port, the Frank is not liable to pay a second time in another. But the case
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is different with the Ottoman subject. The Franks, too, having found it convenient to employ Latin Christians as agents, have procured them a participation of their privileges, and they are no longer subject to the power of the Pachas, or amenable to Turkish justice. They cannot be plundered; and whoever has a commercial process with them, must plead before the European consul. With such disadvantages, is it surprising that the Mahometans should relinquish commerce to their rivals? These agents of the Franks are known in the Levant under the name of *Baratary Drogmans*; that is, privileged Interpreters (o). The *barat*, or *privilege*, is a patent, of which the Sultan makes a present to the ambassadors residing at the Porte. Formerly these ambassadors, in their turn, made presents of them to particular persons in each factory; but within the last twenty years they have been made to understand it is more lucrative to sell them. The present price is

(o) An interpreter in Arabic is called *Terdjeman*, of which our old writers have made *Truchement*. In Egypt it is pronounced *Tergoman*; of which the Venetians have made *Dragomano*, and the French converted into *Drogman*.

from five to six thousand livres (two hundred or two hundred and fifty pounds). Each Ambassador has fifty, which are renewed on the death of the possessor, and form a pretty considerable perquisite.

France has the greatest trade to Syria of any European nation. Her imports consist in five principal articles: 1st, The cloths of Languedoc: 2dly, Cochineal from Cadiz: 3dly, Indigos: 4thly, Sugars: And, 5thly, West India coffee, which is in great request with the Turks, and which they mix with that of Arabia, more esteemed indeed, but too high priced. To these must be added hardware, cast iron, sheet lead, tin, Lyons laces, soaps, &c.

The returns consist almost wholly in cottons, either spun or raw, or manufactured into coarse stuffs; in some silks of Tripoli, the others being prohibited; in gall nuts, in copper and wool, which are brought from other countries to Syria. The Factories, or as we call them, *Echelles* (*p*), of the French,
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(*p*) This whimsical name of *Echelles* (in English *ladders*) was adopted by the inhabitants of Provence, from the Italian

are seven in number, viz. Aleppo, Skandaroon, Latakia, Tripoli, Saide, Acre, and Ramla. The sum of their imports amount to 6,000,000 of livres (250,000*l.*) viz.

For Aleppo and Skandaroon,	3,000,000
Saide and Acre, -	2,000,000
Tripoli and Catagie, -	400,000
Ramla, - -	600,000
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Total,	6,000,000
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All this commerce passes through the single channel of Marfeilles, which possesses the exclusive privilege of sending ships to, and receiving them from, the Levant, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the Province of Languedoc, which furnishes the principal commodities. Strangers, that is, the natives of Turkey, are prohibited from carrying on their commerce, except through the medium of the Marfeilles factors, established in their country. This prohibition was abolished

lian *scala*, a corruption of the Arabic word *kalla*, which signifies a place proper to receive vessels, a road, a harbour. At present the natives say, as the Italians, *scala, rada*.

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in 1777, for several reasons set forth in the ordinance; but the merchants of Marseilles made such remonstrances, that, since the month of April, 1785, matters have again been placed upon their former footing. It is for France to determine how far this trade is to her interest. Considered relatively to the Turkish empire, it may be averred, that the commerce of the Turks with Europe and India, is more detrimental than advantageous. For the articles exported being all raw unwrought materials, the empire deprives itself of all the advantages to be derived from the labour of its own subjects. On the other hand, the commodities imported from Europe and India, being articles of pure luxury, only serve to increase the dissipation of the rich, and the servants of government, whilst, perhaps, they aggravate the wretched condition of the people, and the class of cultivators. Under a government which pays no respect to property, the desire of multiplying enjoyments, cannot but irritate irregular passions, and increase oppression. In order to procure more clothes, furs, laces, sugars, shawls, and India goods; there must be more money, cotton, and silks, and

and more extortions. A momentary advantage may have accrued to the states which furnish these objects of luxury; but are not the advantages of the present moment borrowed from the wealth of future times? And can we hope long to carry on an advantageous commerce with a country which is precipitately hastening to ruin?

C H A P.

CHAP. XXXIX.

Of the Arts, Sciences, and Ignorance of the People.

THE arts and trades in Syria afford room for many considerations. First, The different kinds of them are infinitely less numerous than with us ; we can scarcely reckon twenty, even including the most necessary. In the first place, the religion of Mahomet having proscribed every sort of image and figure, there exists neither painting, nor sculpture, nor engraving, nor any of those numerous professions which depend on them. The Christians alone purchase, for the use of their churches, some pictures of the Greeks at Constantinople, who, in point of taste, are real Turks. In the second place, a multitude of our trades are rendered unnecessary, from the small quantity of furniture used by the Orientals. The whole inventory of a wealthy family consists in a carpet for the feet, in mats, cushions, mattresses, some small cotton cloths, copper and wooden platters for the table, a few stewing pans, a mortar, a portable

able mill, a little porcelain, and some plates of copper tinned. All our apparatus of tapestry, wooden bedsteads, chairs, stools, glasses, desks, bureaux, closets; our buffets with their plate, and table services; in a word, all our cabinet and upholstery work, are luxuries totally unknown to them, so that nothing is so simple as a Turkish removal. Pococke is of opinion that these customs originate in the wandering life formerly led by the ancestors of these nations; but they have had sufficient time to forget this since they have become settled; and we should rather search for the cause of it in the nature of their government, which reduces every thing to what is strictly necessary. Their cloathing is not more complicated, though much more expensive. They are strangers to the hats, perukes, hair-dressing, buttons, buckles, stocks, laced ruffles, and all that superfluity with which we are surrounded. Cotton or silk shirts, which even the Pachas do not count by dozens, and which have neither ruffles nor wristbands, nor plaited collars; an enormous pair of breeches, which serve also by way of stockings; a handkerchief for the head; another round the waist, with

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the three large folds of cloth and calico I have mentioned in describing the dress of the Mamlouks, compose the whole wardrobe of the Orientals. The only articles of luxury are goldsmiths work, which is confined to womens trinkets, saucers for coffee wrought like lace, the ornaments of their harness, their pipes, and the silk stuffs of Aleppo and Damascus. In passing through the streets of the towns, you meet with nothing but a number of beaters of cotton on tenters, retailers of stuffs and mercery, barbers to shave the head, tinnerns, locksmiths, saddlers, and especially sellers of little loaves, hard ware, grain, dates, and sweetmeats, but very few butchers, and these ill supplied. There are also in the great towns a few wretched gunsmiths, who can only repair fire-arms, for not one of them can cast a pistol barrel; as for gun-powder, the frequent occasion they have to make use of it, has excited the industry of the peasants in general to make it, but there is no public manufactory.

In the villages, the inhabitants, limited to mere necessaries, have no arts but those without which they cannot subsist; every one endeavours to supply his own wants, that he may not be obliged to share what he has with others.

others. Each family manufactures the coarse cottons with which they are cloathed. Every house has its portable mill, with which the women grind the barley or the Dourra for their sustenance. The flour from these mills is coarse, and the little round loaves made of it, ill leavened and badly baked; but they preserve life, and that is all which is required. I have already observed how simple and cheap their instruments of husbandry are. In the mountains they do not prune the vines, and they no where ingraft trees; every thing, in short, reminds us of the simplicity of ancient times, which, possibly, as at this day, was only the ignorance of poverty. When we enquire the reason of their want of industry, the answer is uniformly the same: "It is good enough: That is sufficient: What end would it answer to do more?" They are in the right, since they would not be permitted to reap the benefit of their labours.

Secondly; the state of the arts in these countries, and the manner in which they are exercised, are interesting, as they preserve almost in every respect, the discoveries and methods of ancient times. For example, the

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stuffs

stuffs manufactured at Aléppo are not of Arabian invention; this art is borrowed from the Greeks, who themselves, doubtless, imitated the ancient Orientals. The dyes they use are, probably, as old as the time of the Tyrians, and they carry them at this day to a perfection not unworthy of that people; but the workmen, jealous of their art, make an impenetrable mystery of the process. The manner in which the ancients secured the harness of their horses against the strokes of the sabre, was undoubtedly the same which is now made use of at Aleppo and Damascus, for the head stalls of their bridles (*q*). The small silver plates with which the leather is lined, hold together without nails, and are so jointed, that without depriving the leather of its pliancy, there remains no interstice for the edge of the weapon.

The cement they make use of, is no doubt that of the Greeks and Romans. To make

(*q*) On this subject, I shall observe, that the Mamlouks of Cairo exhibit every year at the processions of the Caravan, coats of mail, helmets, and vizors, brasslets, and all the armour of the time of the Croisades. There is also a collection of old arms in the mosque of the Dervises, a league above Cairo, on the banks of the Nile.

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it properly, they take care only to use the lime when boiling; they mix with it one third of sand, and another of ashes and pounded brickduft. With this composition they form wells, cisterns, and vaults, which the water cannot pass through. I have seen a singular species of the latter in Palestine that deserve to be described. The vault is built with cylinders of brick, eight or ten inches long. These cylinders are hollow, and may be about two inches diameter within. They are in a slight degree tapering, the widest end is closed, the other open. To form the roof, they are ranged by the side of each other, with the close end exposed to the weather: they are fastened with plaister of Jerusalem or Nablous, and four workmen can complete the roof of a chamber in a day. The first rains usually penetrate it; but a coat of oil is then laid over it, which effectually keeps the water out. The cracks within are closed by a layer of plaister, and the whole forms a durable and very light roof. With these cylinders they build the walls at the edges of the terraces on the house tops, throughout Syria, to prevent the women, who wash and dry their linen there, from being

seen. The use of them has been lately introduced at Paris; but the invention is of great antiquity in the east

We may affirm the same of the manner of working the iron mines in Lebanon, on account of its great simplicity. It is the method now employed in the Pyrenees, and known under the name of the *Catalonian Forge*. The furnace consists in a sort of chimney formed in the side of a steep declivity. The funnel is filled with wood; which is set fire to; the bellows is applied to the inferior mouth, and the iron ore poured in from above; the metal falls to the bottom, and is taken out by the same mouth at which the fire is lighted. Even their ingenious wooden sliding locks may be traced back to the time of Solomon, who mentions them in his song,

To their music we must not ascribe so high an antiquity. It does not appear to have an earlier origin than the age of the Caliphs, under whom the Arabs applied themselves to it with the more ardour, as all the learned men of that day added the title of Musician, to that of Physician, Geometrician and Astronomer; yet, as its principles were borrow-
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ed from the Greeks, it might afford matter of curious observation to adepts in that science. Such persons are very rarely to be met with in the east. Cairo is perhaps the only place in Egypt or in Syria, where there are a few Shaiks who understand the principles of the art. They have collections of airs which are not noted in our manner, but written in characters, all the names of which are Persian. They have no music but vocal; for they neither know nor esteem instrumental, and they are in the right; for such instruments as they have, not excepting their flutes, are detestable. They are strangers likewise to any other accompaniment than the unison, and the continued base of the Monochord. They are fond of singing with a forced voice in the high tones, and one must have lungs like theirs to support the effort for a quarter of an hour. Their airs, in point of character and execution, resemble nothing we have heard in Europe, except the Seguidillas of the Spaniards. They have divisions more laboured even than those of the Italians, and cadences and inflections of tones impossible to be imitated by European throats. Their performance is accompanied with sighs and

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gestures,

gestures, which paint the passions in a more lively manner than we should venture to allow. They may be said to excel most in the melancholy strain. To behold an Arab with his head inclined, his hand applied to his ear, his eyebrows knit, his eyes languishing; to hear his plaintive tones, his lengthened notes, his sighs and sobs, it is almost impossible to refrain from tears, which, as their expression is, are far from bitter: and indeed they must certainly find a pleasure in shedding them, since among all their songs, they constantly prefer that which excites them most, as among all accomplishments singing is that they most admire.

Dancing, which with us holds an equal rank with music, is far from being held in the same estimation by the Arabs. This art, among them, is branded with a kind of shame; a man cannot practise it without dishonour (*r*), and the exercise of it is only permitted to women. This judgment will appear to us severe, but before we condemn it, it must be considered, that in the eastern

(*r*) The sacred dance of the Dervises, the motions of which are supposed to imitate the revolutions of the stars, must be excepted.

world,

world, dancing is not an imitation of war, as among the Greeks, nor a combination of graceful attitudes and movements, as with us; but a licentious imitation of the utmost wantonness of love. This is the species of dance which, brought from Carthage to Rome, announced the decline of her republican manners, and which, since revived in Spain by the Arabs, still subsists there under the title of the *Fandango*. Notwithstanding the freedom of our manners, it would be difficult, without wounding the ear, accurately to describe it: it will be sufficient to say that the female dancer, with her arms extended, and an empässioned air, singing and accompanying her song with castanets, which she holds between her fingers, executes, without changing her place, all those motions of the body which passion itself carefully conceals under the veil of night. Such is their licentiousness, that none but prostitutes venture to dance in public. Those who make a profession of it are called *Rawazi*, and those who excel, assume the name of *Alma*, or proficient in the art. The most celebrated are those of Cairo. A late traveller, (M. Savary,) has drawn a flattering picture of them; but

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I confess the originals did not produce the same enthusiasm in me. These Alma, with their yellow linen, their tawny skins, their naked pendent breasts, their blackened eyelashes, their blue lips, and their hands stained with henna, only reminded me of the *Bacchantes* of the *Porcherons* (*f*); and if we reflect that, even among the most polished nations, this class of women retain not a little vulgarity, it is not credible, that among a people, where the most simple arts are still in a state of barbarism, they can shew much refinement and delicacy in one which requires the most.

The intimate connection between the arts and sciences, leaves no room to doubt that the latter are still more neglected, or, to confess the truth, totally unknown. The barbarism of Syria, as well as that of Egypt, is compleat; and, from the similarity which is usually found in the different provinces of the same empire, we may form the like judgment of all the countries under the dominion of the Turks. In vain have some persons denied this asser-

(*f*) Wine-houses without Paris, and free from the city duties; the resort of the populace. The idea, might, perhaps, be better conveyed by the term *Bacchantes of Billingsgate*.

tion;

tion; in vain do they talk of *colleges, places of education, and books*: these words in Turkey convey not the same ideas as with us. The age of the Caliphs is past among the Arabs, and yet to begin among the Turks. These two nations have at present neither geometri-
 cians, astronomers, musicians, nor physicians. Scarcely can we meet with one of the latter who knows how to bleed with a fleam; when they have ordered a cautery, applied fire, or prescribed some common recipe, their knowledge is exhausted: and, consequently, the valet de chambre of an European is consulted as an Esculapius. Where indeed should physicians be formed, since there are no establishments of the kind, and anatomy is directly repugnant to the prejudices of their religion? Astronomy might gain more admirers, but by astronomy they understand only the art of discovering the decrees of fate by the motions of the stars, and not the profound science of calculating their revolutions. The monks of Mar-Hanna, who are possessed of books, and maintain a correspondence with Rome, are not less ignorant than the rest. Never, before my arrival among them, had they heard that the earth turned round the
 sun;

fun; and this opinion was very near giving great offence to the brotherhood; for the zealots, finding that it contradicted the Holy Bible, were inclined to treat me as a heretic. Fortunately the Vicar General had good sense enough to doubt, and to say: "Without
" blindly crediting the Franks, we must not
" too hastily deny all they assert; for every
" thing they bring us, the produce of their
" arts, is so infinitely superior to our own,
" that they may possibly discover things
" which are beyond our ideas." I escaped by not taking the blame of this novel hypothesis on myself, but restoring the discovery to our modern philosophers, who are esteemed by the monks, even at this day, as Visionaries.

A great difference then should be made between the present Arabs, and those of the times of El-Mamoun, and Aroun-el-Raschid, and it must be admitted that, even of them, we have formed very extravagant ideas. Their empire was too soon destroyed to suffer them to make any great progress in the sciences. What we see happen in our days in some of the European states, proves that they require ages to become established

in any country. And from what we know of the Arabian writers, do we not constantly find them either the translators, or echos of the Greeks? The only science which is peculiar to them, and the only one they continue to cultivate, is that of their own language; but, by the study of language, we must not understand that philosophical spirit of research which, in words, investigates the history of ideas, in order to perfect the art by which they are communicated. Among the Mahometans, the study of the Arabic is only cultivated on account of its connection with religion; and this is in fact very confined, for the Koran is "the immediate word of God:" but, as this word only retains the identity of its nature, so far as it corresponds with the meaning of God and his prophet, it is a matter of the greatest moment to learn, not only the exact signification of the words employed, but, likewise, the accents, inflexions, sighs and pauses, in short, all the most minute niceties of prosody and pronunciation; and it is impossible to form an idea how complicated all this is without having heard their declamation in the Mosques. As for the principles of the language, those of the grammar alone
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take several years to acquire. Next is taught the *Nabou*, a part of grammar which may be defined, the science of terminations foreign to the vulgar Arabic, which are superadded to words, and vary according to the numbers, cases, genders, and persons. When this is attained, the student is reckoned among the learned. Eloquence is next to be studied, and that requires whole years; for the masters, mysterious like the Brachmans, discover the secrets of their art only by degrees. At length, they proceed to the study of the law and the *Fakah*, or *Science, per excellentiam*, by which they mean theology. Now, if we consider that the perpetual object of these studies is always the Koran, and that it is necessary thoroughly to be acquainted with all the mystical and allegorical significations ascribed to it, and to read all the commentaries and paraphrases upon it, of which there are two hundred volumes on the first verse; if we reflect that it is requisite to dispute on thousands of ridiculous cases of conscience; such as, if it be allowable to mix mortar with impure water; whether a man who has an issue be not in the case of a defiled woman; as also to be able to discuss the various questions, whether

whether the soul of the prophet was not created before that of Adam; whether he did not counsel God in the creation; and what was the counsel he gave; it cannot but be allowed, that one may pass one's whole lifetime in learning a great deal, and knowing nothing.

As for the instruction bestowed on the vulgar, as the professors of the law do not perform the function of our vicars and priests, as they neither preach, nor catechise, nor confess, it may be pronounced that they receive none. All the education of children consists in attending private masters, who teach them to read the Koran, if they are Mahometans, or the Psalms, if Christians, and a little writing, and reckoning from memory: this continues till they arrive almost at manhood, when each of them chuses some profession, in order to marry and gain a livelihood. The contagion of ignorance infects even the children of the Franks, and it is a maxim at Marseilles, that a *Levantin* must be a dissipated youth, idle, and without emulation, and whose whole knowledge will be confined to being able to speak several languages,

guages, though this rule, like all others, has its exceptions.

In examining the causes of the general ignorance of the Orientals, I shall not say with a late traveller, that it arises from the difficulties of the language, and of reading and writing. Undoubtedly the difficulty of the dialects, the perplexity of the characters, and the defects of their alphabet, multiply the obstacles to instruction. But habit surmounts them, and the Arabs attain as perfect a facility in writing and reading as the Europeans themselves. The real cause is the few means of instruction they possess, among which must be first reckoned the scarcity of books. With us nothing is so common as this valuable assistance ; nothing so general among all ranks as the practice of reading. In the East, on the contrary, nothing is so rare. There are but two libraries throughout Syria, that of Marhanna, of which I have spoken, and that of Djezzar at Acre. The reader has seen how insignificant the former is, both with respect to the number and the choice of its books. I shall not speak of the latter as an eye witness ; but two persons who have seen it have assured me, that it did not contain more than three hundred

dred volumes; yet these are the spoils of all Syria, and, among others, of the Convent of St. Sauveur, near Saide, and of the Shaik Kairi, Mufti of Ramla. At Aleppo, the house of Bitar is the only one which possesses any books, and those are astronomical, which nobody understands. At Damascus the lawyers hold even their own science in no estimation. Cairo alone is rich in books. There is a collection of very ancient ones at the Mosque of El-azhar, and a considerable number is in daily circulation; but Christians are forbid to touch them. Twelve years ago, however, the monks of Mar-Hanna, desirous of procuring some, sent one of their number thither to purchase them. By a fortunate accident he got acquainted with an Effendi, with whom he became a favourite, and who, wishing to obtain from him some lessons in astrology, in which he thought him an adept, procured him some books. In the space of six months, this monk assured me, that upwards of two hundred passed through his hands; and on my enquiring on what subjects, he replied, treatises on grammar, the Nahou, eloquence, and the interpretation of the Koran; but very few histories; or even

tales. He had never seen two copies of the Arabian Nights Entertainments. From this state of facts, we are certainly authorized to affirm, not only that there is a scarcity of good books in the East, but that books of any kind are very rare. The reason of this is evident. In these countries every book is a manuscript; the writing of which is necessarily slow, difficult, and expensive. The labour of many months produces but one copy. That must be without erasure, and is liable to be destroyed by a thousand accidents. It is impossible therefore for books to multiply, and consequently for knowledge to be propagated. If we compare this state of things with what passes among ourselves, we cannot but be deeply impressed with the advantages of printing. We shall even be convinced, on reflexion, that this art alone is possibly the main spring of those great revolutions, which, within the last three centuries, have taken place in the moral system of Europe. The press, by rendering books common, has diffused a more equal share of knowledge through every class; and, by rapidly communicating ideas and discoveries, has produced a more speedy improvement

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provement and more univerfal acquaintance with the arts and sciences. By its means, all thofe who occupy themfelves in literary purfuits, are become a body perpetually affembled, who purfue without intermiffion the fame labours. By printing, every writer is become a public orator, who addreffes himfelf not only to his city, but to his nation, and to all Europe. If in this new fpecies of popular affembly he has loft the advantage of declamation and gefture to excite the paffions, he is amply indemnified by that of having a more felect audience, and being able to reafon with more temperance, and if the impreffion he makes be lefs lively, it is certainly more durable. Since the difcovery of the art of printing, therefore, fingle men have been feen to produce, by the mere effects of their writings, moral revolutions in whole nations, and have obtained an influence over the minds of men, which has even awed and controuled the authority of the reigning powers.

Another véry remarkable effect of the prefs, is that which it has had on hiftory. By giving a general and rapid publicity to facts, it has rendered their certainty more eafy to be

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ascertained ; whereas, when books were written by hand, the collection made by one man, producing only one copy, could be seen and criticized by only a very small number of readers ; and these readers are the more to be suspected, as they must depend on the choice of the author. If he should permit copies to be taken, they multiply and spread very slowly. In the mean time witnesses drop off ; proofs, which might once have been produced, lose their force ; contradictions start up, and a wide field is opened to error, passion, and misrepresentation. This is the cause of all those monstrous relations with which the histories of antiquity, as well as those of Modern Asia, abound. If among those histories we find some which bear striking marks of probability, they are those whose writers were either eye-witnesses of the facts they relate, or public men who wrote to an enlightened people, able to contradict them whenever they departed from truth. Such was Cæsar, the principal actor in the events related in his own memoirs ; such was Xenophon, the general of the ten thousand, whose able retreat he has so well described : such was Polybius, the friend and companion of Scipio,
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the conqueror of Carthage: such also were Sallust and Tacitus, who had been consuls: Thucydides, the commander of an army, and Herodotus, senator, and deliverer of Halicarnassus. When history, on the contrary, is only a collection of ancient events, delivered down by tradition; when these facts are merely collected by individuals, it is neither of the same species, nor does it bear the same character. How great is the difference between the preceding writers and Livy, Quintus Curtius, and Diodorus Siculus! Fortunately, however, for them, the countries in which they wrote were civilized, and public information might serve to guide them respecting recent facts. But when nations were in a state of anarchy, or groaning under such a despotism as prevails at this day in the east, writers, absorbed in that ignorance and credulity which ever accompany such a state, might boldly commit their errors and prejudices to history; and we may remark, that it is in the productions of such ages and nations that we meet with all the monsters of fiction, while in polished periods, and in the hands of original writers, the annals of history only present us with a nar-

rative of facts similar to those which are daily passing before our eyes.

This influence of the press is so efficacious, that the establishment of Mar-Hanna alone, imperfect as it is, has already produced a sensible difference among the Christians. The art of reading and writing, and even a sort of information, are more common among them at present, than they were thirty years ago. Unfortunately their outset has been of that kind, which long retarded the progress of improvement, and excited innumerable disorders in Europe. For bibles and religious books being the first which proceeded from the press, the general attention was turned towards theological discussions, whence resulted a fermentation which was the source of the Schisms of England and Germany, and the unhappy political troubles of France. If instead of translating their Buzembaum, and the misanthropical reveries of Nieremberg and Didaco Stella, the Jesuits had printed and dispersed books of practical morality and public utility, adapted to the state of the Kesraouan and the Druzes, their labours might have produced in those countries, and even through all Syria, political consequences which

which might eventually have changed their whole system. At present, all hope of such improvement is over, or at least greatly retarded; the first fervor has been spent on useless objects. Besides, the monks are poor, and if Djezzar takes it into his head, he will destroy their press. To this he will probably be induced by the fanaticism of the professors of the law, who, without very well knowing what they have to dread from the press, have, notwithstanding, conceived an aversion to it; as if folly possessed the natural instinct of divining what may prove its destruction.

The scarcity of books, and the want of the means of information, are then, as I have just said, the causes of the ignorance of the Orientals; but these must, after all, be regarded merely as accessaries: the radical source is still in the government, which not only does not encourage the propagation of knowledge, but exerts every effort to stifle it in the birth. Under the administration of the Turks, there is no prospect of obtaining rank or fortune through the channel of the arts and sciences, or polite literature. The talents of the most distinguished geometri-

cians, astronomers, or engineers of Europe, would not preserve their possessor from languishing in obscurity, or groaning beneath the persecution of tyranny. If science, therefore, which itself is acquired with so much difficulty and labour, can only make us regret its inutility, and even expose us to danger, it is better never to possess it. For this reason, the Orientals are ignorant, and must necessarily be so, from the same principle which makes them poor, as they may apply with justice to science, what they say of the arts: "What good purpose will it answer to do more?"

C H A P. XL.

Of the manners and character of the inhabitants of Syria.

OF all the subjects of observation any country affords, the moral character of its inhabitants is unquestionably the most important; but it must likewise be acknowledged, it is at the same time the most difficult: for it is not sufficient to make a barren enquiry into facts; the essential object is to investigate their various causes and relations; to discover the open or secret, the remote or immediate springs, which produce in men those habits of action we call manners, and that uniform disposition of mind we name character. Now, to succeed in such an enquiry, it is necessary to communicate with the men we wish to know; we must place ourselves in their situations, in order to feel by what they are influenced, and the consequences which result; we must live in their country, learn their language, and adopt their customs; conditions seldom complied with by travellers; and which,

which, even when they are, still leave to be surmounted numerous difficulties, which arise from the nature of the thing itself; for we have not only to combat the prejudices we may meet in our way, but to overcome our own; against which we can never be sufficiently on our guard, habits are powerful, facts liable to be mistaken, and error easy. The observer, then, should be circumspect though not timid, and the reader, obliged to see with the eyes of others, should watch attentively both the reasoning of his guide, and the deductions he may be inclined to draw himself.

When an European arrives in Syria, or indeed in any part of the eastern world, what appears most extraordinary to him, in the exterior of the inhabitants, is the almost total opposition of their manners to our own: it seems as if some premeditated design had determined to produce an infinity of the most striking contrasts between the people of Asia and those of Europe. We wear short and close dresses; theirs are long and ample. We suffer our hair to grow, and shave the beard; they let the beard grow, and shave the head. With us, to uncover the head is
a mark

a mark of respect; with them, a naked head is a sign of folly. We salute in an inclined posture; they upright. We pass our lives erect; they are almost continually seated. They sit and eat upon the ground; we upon raised seats. With respect to language, likewise, their manner of writing is directly contrary to ours, and the greatest part of our masculine nouns are feminine with them. To the bulk of travellers these contrasts only appear whimsical; but it may be interesting to philosophers, to enquire into the causes of so great a diversity of habits, in men who have the same wants, and in nations which appear to have one common origin.

Another distinguishing characteristic, no less remarkable, is that religious exterior observable in the countenances, conversation, and gestures of the inhabitants of Turkey. In the streets, every one appears with his string of beads. We hear nothing but emphatical exclamations of *Ya Allab!* O God! *Allab akbar!* God most great! *Allab taala,* God most high! every instant the ear is struck with a profound sigh, or noisy eructation which follows the pronouncing of some one of the ninety-nine epithets of God; such

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as *Ya rani!* Source of riches ! *Ya jobban!* O most to be praised ! *Ya majbour!* O impenetrable ! If a man sells bread in the streets, he does not cry bread, but exclaims *Allah kerim*, God is liberal. If he sells water, he cries, *Allah djawad*, God is generous ; and so of other articles. The usual form of salutation is, *God preserve thee* ; and of thanks, *God protect thee* : in a word, God is in every thing, and every where. These men then are very devout, says the reader ? Yes, but without being the better in consequence of this devotion, for I have already observed, their zeal is no other than a spirit of jealousy and contradiction, arising from the diversity of religions ; since in the Christian a profession of his faith is a bravado, an act of independence ; and in the Mahometan, an act of superiority and power. This devoutness, therefore, merely the offspring of pride and profound ignorance, is no better than a fanatic superstition, and the source of innumerable disorders.

There is still another characteristic in the exterior of the Orientals, which attracts the attention of an observer : I mean their grave and phlegmatic air in every thing they do,
or

or say. Instead of that open and cheerful countenance, which we either naturally possess or assume, their behaviour is serious, austere, and melancholy; they rarely laugh, and the gaiety of the French appears to them a fit of delirium. When they speak, it is with deliberation, without gestures, and without passion; they listen without interrupting you; they are silent for whole days together, and by no means pique themselves on supporting conversation. If they walk, it is always leisurely, and on business; they have no idea of our troublesome activity, and our *walks* backwards and forwards for amusement. Continually seated, they pass whole days musing, with their legs crossed, their pipes in their mouths, and almost without changing their attitude. It should seem as if motion were a punishment to them, and that, like the Indians, they regard inaction as essential to happiness.

This observation, which may be extended to the greater part of their habits and customs, has, in our time, given occasion to a very summary system of the causes of the peculiar character of the Orientals, and several other nations. A celebrated writer, reflecting

on what the Greeks and Romans have said of Asiatic effeminacy, and the accounts given by travellers of the indolence of the Indians, is of opinion, that this indolence forms the distinguishing character of the inhabitants of those countries; pursuing his enquiries into the common cause of this general fact, and finding, that all these nations inhabit what are called *hot countries*, he has attributed the cause of their indolence to heat; and assuming the fact as a principle, has laid it down as an axiom, that the inhabitants of hot countries must necessarily be indolent, inert of body, and from analogy, likewise inert of mind and character. He goes even still farther; remarking, that unlimited monarchy is the most usual form of government among these nations; and considering despotism as the effect of the supineness of a people, he concludes, that despotism is as much the natural government of these countries, and as necessary as the climate under which they live. It should seem as if the severity, or, more properly speaking, the barbarity of the inference should have put men upon their guard against such erroneous principles: yet this system has been received with great applause in

in France, nay, even throughout Europe; and the opinion of the author of the *Spirit of Laws*, is become among the most numerous class of reasoners, an authority from which it is presumptuous to differ. This is not the place to write a formal treatise completely to overthrow this error: besides that such a refutation already exists in the work of a philosopher, whose name is at least equal to that of Montesquieu. But in order to raise some doubts at least in the minds of those who, without giving themselves time to reflect, have adopted this opinion, I shall offer a few objections which the subject naturally suggests.

The doctrine of the general indolence of the Oriental and southern nations, is founded on that opinion of Asiatic effeminacy originally transmitted to us by the Greeks and Romans; but what are the facts on which that was built? Were they fixed and determinate, or did this opinion rely on vague and general ideas like the systems of the moderns? Had the ancients a more accurate knowledge of those countries in their time, than we have obtained in ours; and are we justified in founding on their report an hypothesis difficult to establish from our own
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more minute examination? but, admitting the facts as we receive them from history, were the Assyrians, whose ambition and wars during five hundred years, threw Asia into confusion; the Medes, who shook off their yoke, and dispossessed them; the Persians who, under Cyrus, within the space of thirty years, extended their conquests from the Indus to the Mediterranean; were these inert and indolent people? May we not oppose to this system the Phœnicians, who, for so many centuries, were in possession of the commerce of the whole ancient world; the Palmyrenians, of whose industry we possess such stupendous monuments; the Carduchi of Xenophon, who braved the power of the *Great King* in the very heart of his empire; the Parthians, those unconquerable rivals of Rome; and even the Jews, who, limited to a little state, never ceased to struggle, for a thousand years, against the most powerful empires? if the men of these nations were inert, what is activity? If they were active, where then is the influence of climate? Why in the same countries, where so much energy was displayed in former times, do we at present find such profound indolence? Why are the
modern

modern Greeks so debased amid the very ruins of Sparta and Athens, and in the fields of Marathon and Thermopylæ? Will it be alleged, that the climate has changed? Where are the proofs? Supposing this true, it must have changed by irregular fits; the climate of Persia must have altered greatly from Cyrus to Xerxes; that of Athens from Aristides to Demetrius Phalereus; and that of Rome from Scipio to Sylla, and from Sylla to Tiberius. The climate of the Portugeze must have changed since the days of Albuquerque, and that of the Turks since Soliman? If indolence be peculiar to the southern countries, how are we to account for a Carthage in Africa, Rome in Italy, and the Buccaneers at St. Domingo? Why do we meet with the Malays in India, and the Bedouins in Arabia? Why, too, at the same period, and under the same sky, do we find a Sybaris near Crotona, a Capua in the vicinity of Rome, and a Sardes contiguous to Miletus? Whence is it, that we see, under our own eyes, and in Europe itself, northern governments as languid as those of the south? Why, in our own empire, are the southern more active than the northern provinces? If the same effects are

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observable under directly contrary circumstances, and different effects under the same circumstances, what becomes of these pretended principles? What is this influence of climate? and what is to be understood by activity? Is it only to be accorded to warlike nations? and was Sparta, when not engaged in war, to be esteemed inert? What do we mean by hot countries? Where are we to draw the line of cold and temperate? Let the partisans of Montesquieu ascertain this, that we may henceforward be enabled to determine the quantity of energy in a nation by the temperature, and at what degree of the thermometer we are to fix its aptitude to slavery or freedom!

But a physical observation has been called in to corroborate this position; and we are told that heat abates our strength; we are more indolent in summer than in winter: the inhabitants of hot countries, therefore, must be indolent. Let us suppose this true, Whence is it then, that, under the same influence of climate, the tyrant possesses more energy to oppress, than the people to defend themselves? But, is it not evident that we reason like the inhabitants of a country where cold
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is more prevalent than heat? Were a similar thesis to be maintained in Egypt and Africa, it would there be said, the cold prevents motion, and obstructs the circulation. The truth is, that our sensations are relative to our habits, and that bodies assume a temperament analagous to the climate in which they live; so that they are only affected by the extremes of the ordinary medium. We hate sweating; the Egyptian loves it, and dreads nothing so much as a failure of perspiration. Thus, whether we refer to historical, or natural facts, the system of Montesquieu, so specious at first sight, turns out, when examined, to be a mere paradox, which has owed its success only to the impression made by the novelty of the subject, at the time the Spirit of Laws appeared, and the indirect flattery it offered to those nations by which it was so favourably received.

To give precision to our ideas, respecting the question of activity, a shorter and more certain method than these far-fetched and equivocal reasonings would have been, to have studied nature herself, and to have examined the origin and motives of activity in man. If we pursue this mode of investigation,

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tion, we shall perceive that all action, whether of body or mind, has its source in our necessities; and augments as they increase. We may follow its gradations from the rudest beginnings, to the state of the most mature improvement. In man yet savage, hunger and thirst awaken the first exertions of the soul and body. These are the wants which prompt him to run, search, watch, and employ cunning or violence, as he finds them necessary: all his activity depends on the means of providing for his subsistence. Is that easily obtained, has he fruit, game and fish, within his reach, he is less active, since by putting forth his hand, he can satisfy himself; and being satisfied, nothing excites him to motion, till the experience of various enjoyments has awakened in him desires which become new wants, and new motives of activity. On the other hand, are the means of supplying his necessities difficult to be obtained; is game hard to be found, and possessed of agility to avoid him; are the fish wily, and do the fruits soon decay; man is forced to be more active; he must exercise his body and his mind, to maintain life; he must become swift like the beasts, wily like the fish, and provident to

preserve his fruits; he must endeavour the improvement of his natural faculties. He, therefore, bestirs himself, he thinks, he meditates; he conceives the idea of bending the branch of a tree to form a bow, and pointing a reed to make an arrow, he fastens a handle to a sharp stone, and procures him a hatchet; he then labours to make nets, to fell trees, to hollow out their trunks, and build canoes. Already has he provided for his most urgent necessities; already the experience of a multitude of sensations has made him acquainted with enjoyments and sufferings; and his activity is redoubled to remove the one, and multiply the other. He has felt the pleasure of being shaded from the heat of the Sun; he builds himself a cabin: he has experienced that a skin secures him from the cold; he makes himself clothing: he has tasted brandy and smoked tobacco; he likes them, and wishes to have more; but to procure them he must bring beavers skins, elephants teeth, gold dust, &c. He redoubles his activity, and carries his industry so far as to sell even his fellow creature. In such a progress, as in the primary cause, it must be acknowledged, that activity has little or no

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connection with heat; only the inhabitants of the north being reputed to stand more in need of nourishment than those of the south, it may be alleged, that they must consequently be possessed of more activity; but this difference in necessary wants, has very narrow limits. Besides, it is well ascertained, that an Esquimaux or a Samoyede, requires really a greater quantity of aliment, than a Bedouin or an Ichthyophagus of Persia? Are the savages of Brazil and Guinea less voracious than those of Canada and California? Let my opponents beware: the facility of obtaining a great quantity of food, is perhaps the primary cause of voraciousness; and this facility, especially in a savage state, depends less on climate than on the nature of the soil, and its richness or poverty in pasturage, in forests, and in lakes, and consequently in game, fish, and fruits; circumstances which are found indifferently under every parallel.

From these reflections it appears that the nature of the soil has a real influence on activity. We must perceive, that in the social as in the savage state, a country, in which the means of subsistence are somewhat difficult to be procured, will have more active, and more industrious

industrious inhabitants; while in another where nature has lavished every thing, the people will be indolent and inactive. And this is perfectly conformable to historical fact; for we always find the conquering nations poor, and issuing from lands either barren, or difficult of cultivation, while the conquered people are inhabitants of fertile and opulent countries. It is even worthy of observation, that these needy conquerors, established among rich nations, shortly lose their energy, and become effeminate. Such was the case with the Persians, who, under Cyrus, descended from the Elymais, into the fertile fields watered by the Euphrates; such were the Macedonians under Alexander, when transplanted from Mount Rhodope to the plains of Asia; such the Tartars of Djenkis-kan, when settled in China and Bengal; and such the Arabs so victorious under Mahomet, after the conquest of Spain and Egypt. Hence we may affirm, that it is not as inhabitants of hot, but as inhabitants of rich, countries that nations are inclined to indolence; and this maxim is exactly conformable with what we observe in society in general, since we see there is always least activity among the more opulent classes; but as this fa-

tiety and poverty do not exist for all the individuals of a nation, we must recur to reasons more general, and more efficacious, than the nature of the soil; I mean the social institutions, called *Government* and *Religion*. These are the true sources and regulators of the activity or indolence of individuals, and nations. These are the efficient causes, which, as they extend or limit the natural or superfluous wants, limit or extend the activity of all men. A proof that their influence operates in spite of the difference of climate and soil, is, that Tyre, Carthage, and Alexandria, formerly possessed the same industry as London, Paris, and Amsterdam; that the Buccaneers, and the Malayans have displayed equal turbulence and courage with the Normans; and that the Russians and Polanders have the apathy and indifference of the Hindoos, and the negroes. But as civil and religious institutions are perpetually varied and changed by the passions of men, their influence changes and varies in very short intervals of time. Hence it is, that the Romans, commanded by Scipio, rembled so little those governed by Tiberius; and that the Greeks, of the age of Aristides and Themistocles, were so unlike those of
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the time of Constantine. Let us examine what passes within ourselves. Do we not experience, that our activity has less dependence on physical causes, than the actual circumstances of the society of which we are members? Are our desires excited by necessary or superfluous wants, both our bodies and minds are animated with new life; passion inspires us with an activity ardent as our desires, and persevering as our hopes. Are these hopes disappointed, desire decays, activity languishes, and discouragement induces apathy and indolence. This explains why our activity varies with our conditions, our situations, and the different periods of our life. Why does the man, who was active in his youth, become indolent in his old age? Why is there more activity in capital and commercial cities, than in towns without commerce, and in the country? To awaken activity there must be objects of desire; and to maintain it, the hope of arriving at enjoyment. If these two essentials are wanting, there is an end to individual and national activity. And such is the condition of the Orientals in general, and particularly of those of whom we are treating. What should induce them to move, if no motion procures them

them the hope of an enjoyment equivalent to the trouble they must take? How can they be otherwise than indolent in their most simple habits, if their social institutions render it a sort of necessity?

The most intelligent observer of antiquity, after having made the same remark on the Asiatics of his time, has assigned the same reason. “As to the effeminacy and indolence of the Asiatics, (says he in a passage which well deserves to be cited) (t), if they are less warlike, and more gentle in their manners than the Europeans, no doubt the nature of their climate, more temperate than ours, contributes greatly to this difference. But we must not forget the form of their governments, which are all despotic, and subject to the arbitrary will of their kings. Men who are not permitted the enjoyment of their natural rights, but whose passions are perpetually under the guidance of their masters, will never be found courageous in battle. To them the risks and advantages of war are by no means equal. Obligated to forsake

(t) *Hippocrates de aëre, locis et aquis.*

“their

“ their friends, their country, their families;
 “ to support cruel fatigues, and even death
 “ itself, what is the recompence of so many
 “ sacrifices? Danger and death. Their masters
 “ alone enjoy the booty and the spoils they
 “ have purchased with their blood. But let
 “ them combat in their own cause, and reap
 “ the reward of their victory, or feel the
 “ shame of their defeat, they will no longer
 “ be deficient in courage; and the truth of
 “ this is sufficiently proved by both the
 “ Greeks and Barbarians, who, in those
 “ countries, live under their own laws, and
 “ are free; for they are more courageous than
 “ any other race of men.”

This is precisely the character of the Ori-
 entals of our days; and what the Grecian phi-
 losopher has said of some particular tribes,
 who resisted the power of the Great king and
 his Satraps, corresponds exactly with what we
 have seen of the Druzes, the Maronites, the
 Kurds, the Arabs, Shaik-Daher, and the Be-
 douins. It must be admitted, the moral cha-
 racter of nations, like that of individuals,
 chiefly depends on the social state in which
 they live; since it is true, that our actions are
 governed by our civil and religious laws, and
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since our habits are no more than a repetition of those actions, and our character only the disposition to act in such a manner, under such circumstances, it evidently follows, that these must especially depend on the nature of the government and religion. In all the observations I have made, I have never failed to remark the influence of these two causes operating more or less immediately. This will become still clearer, when considered more circumstantially.

I have said that the Orientals, in general, have a grave and phlegmatic exterior, a stayed and almost listless deportment, and a serious, nay, even sad and melancholy countenance. Were the climate or the soil the radical cause of this, the effect would be the same in every individual. But that is not the case: Under this general character, there are a thousand peculiar minute varieties in different classes and individuals, arising from their situation, relative to the influence of government, which differs in its effects on these classes, and these individuals. Thus we observe that the peasants subject to the Turks are more gloomy than those of the tributary countries; that the inhabitants of the country are less gay than those of the towns; and that

that those on the coast are more cheerful than such as dwell at a greater distance from it; that in the same town, the professors of the law are more serious than the military, and these again more so than the people. We may even remark, that, in the great cities, the people have much of that dissipated and careless air they usually have with us; because there, as well as here, inured to suffering from habit, and devoid of reflection from ignorance, they enjoy a kind of security. Having nothing to lose, they are in no dread of being plundered. The merchant, on the contrary, lives in a state of perpetual alarm, under the double apprehension of acquiring no more, and losing what he possesses. He trembles lest he should attract the attention of rapacious authority, which would consider an air of satisfaction as a proof of opulence, and the signal for extortion. The same dread prevails throughout the villages, where each peasant is afraid of exciting the envy of his equals, and the avarice of the Aga and his soldiers. In such a country, where the subject is perpetually watched by a despoiling government, he must assume a serious countenance for the same reason that he wears ragged clothes,

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and makes a public parade of eating cheese and olives. The same cause, though it has a less influence on the lawyers, is not, however, without its effect on them; but the insolence in which they have been educated, and the pedantry of their manners, render it unnecessary to assign any other.

With respect to their indolence, it is not surprising that the inhabitants of the cities and the country, fatigued with labour, should have an inclination to repose. But it is remarkable, that when these people are once in action, they exert themselves with a vivacity and ardour almost unknown in our climates. This is more particularly observable in the sea ports and commercial towns. An European cannot but admire with what activity the sailors, with their naked arms and legs, handle the oars, bend the sails, and perform every manœuvre; with what ardour the porters unload a boat, and carry the heaviest couffes (u). Always singing, and answering by couplets to one who directs their labour, they perform all their motions in cadence, and redouble their exertions by mak-

(u) Sacks made of straw, greatly used in Asia.

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ing them in time. It has been said, on this subject, that the inhabitants of hot countries have a natural propensity to music; but in what consists its analogy with the climate? Would it not be more rational to say, that the hot countries we are acquainted with, having made a considerable progress in improvement and knowledge long before our cold climates, the people have retained some traces of the fine arts which were formerly cultivated among them. Our merchants frequently reproach this people, and especially those of the country, with not labouring so often, nor so long, as they are able. But why should they labour beyond their wants, since the superfluity of their industry would procure them no additional enjoyments? In many respects, a man of the lower class of people resembles the savages; when he has expended his strength in procuring a subsistence, he takes his repose; it is only by rendering that subsistence less difficult to acquire, and by exciting him with the temptation of present enjoyments, that he can be induced to exert an uniform activity; and we have seen, that the Turkish government is of a directly contrary tendency. As to the

sedentary life of the natives, what motive has a man to be active in a country where the police has never thought either of laying out walks, or encouraging plantations ; where there is no safety without the towns, nor pleasure within their precincts ; where every thing, in short, invites to stay at home ? Is it astonishing that such political maxims should have produced sedentary habits ? And must not these habits, in their turn, become the causes of inaction ?

The comparison of our civil and domestic state, with that of the Orientals, will furnish still further reasons for that phlegm which constitutes their general character. One of the chief sources of gaiety with us, is the social intercourse of the table, and the use of wine. The Orientals are almost strangers to this double enjoyment. Good cheer would infallibly expose them to extortion, and wine to a corporal punishment, from the zeal of the police in enforcing the precepts of the Koran. It is with great reluctance, that the Mahometans tolerate the Christians in the use of a liquor they envy them ; wine, therefore, is not habitual or familiar, except in the Kefraouan, and the country of the Druzes ;
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and their repasts they have a cheerfulness which brandy does not procure even in the cities of Aleppo and Damascus.

A second source of gaiety among us, is the free intercourse between the two sexes, which prevails more particularly in France. The effect of which is, that even without any particular views, the men endeavour to obtain the good opinion of the women, and study to acquire the manners most likely to ensure it. Now, such is the nature, or such the education of the sex, that the first merit in their eyes is to be able to amuse them; and nothing is so certain of succeeding with them, as sprightliness and mirth. Hence we have contracted a habit of trifling, politeness and frivolity, which is become the distinguishing character of the French nation in Europe. In Asia on the contrary, the women are rigorously secluded from the society of men. Constantly shut up in their houses, they have no communication but with their husband, their father, their brother, or at most with their cousin-german. Carefully veiled in the streets, they dare hardly speak to a man, even on business. Every body must be strangers to them: it would be indecent to fix

your eyes on them, and you must let them pass you, as if there were something contagious in their nature. And indeed this is nearly the idea of the Orientals, who entertain a general sentiment of contempt for that sex. It may be asked; what is the cause of this? The same which operates on every thing; the laws and government. In fact, Mahomet, passionately fond as he was of women, has not, however, done them the honour of treating them in his Koran as appertaining to the human species; he does not so much as make mention of them either with respect to the ceremonies of religion, or the rewards of another life; and it is even a sort of problem with the Mahometans, whether women have souls. The government is still more unjust towards them; for it denies them the possession of any landed property, and so completely deprives them of every kind of personal liberty, as to leave them dependent all their lives on a husband, a father, or a relation. In this state of slavery, having nothing at their disposal, we cannot suppose it very necessary to solicit their favour, or to adopt that gaiety of manners they find so captivating. The government and laws are, no doubt, the

the efficient cause of this sequestration of the women; and perhaps, were it not for the facility of divorces, and the dread of seeing a wife or daughter carried off by some powerful man, the Asiatics would be less anxious to conceal them from strangers.

This situation of the women among the Orientals, occasions a great contrast between their manners and ours. Such is their delicacy on this head, that they never speak of them; and it would be esteemed highly indecent to make any enquiries of the men respecting the women of their family. We must be considerably advanced in familiarity with them, to enter into a conversation on such a subject; and when we then give them some account of our manners, it is impossible to express their amazement. They are unable to conceive how our women go with their faces uncovered, when, in their country, an uplifted veil is the mark of a prostitute, or the signal for a love adventure. They have no idea how it is possible to see them, to talk with them, and touch them, without emotion, or to be alone with them without proceeding to the last extremities. This astonishment will sufficiently shew what opinion

they entertain of their females ; and we need not hesitate to conclude they are absolutely ignorant of love, in our sense of the word. That desire on which it is founded, is with them stripped of all those accessories which constitute its charm ; privation is there without a sacrifice, victory without a combat, and enjoyment without delicacy ; they pass at once from torment to satiety. Lovers there are prisoners, always watching to deceive their keepers, and always alert to seize the first opportunity, because it seldom happens, and is soon lost. Secret as conspirators, they conceal their good fortune as a crime because it is attended with no less fatal consequences. Indiscretion can scarcely avoid the poniard, the pistol, or poison. Its destructive consequences to the women render them implacable in punishing, and, to revenge themselves, they are frequently more cruel than their husbands and their brothers. This severity preserves a considerable degree of chastity and decorum in the country ; but in the great towns, where there are more resources for intrigue, as much debauchery prevails as among us ; only with this difference, that it is more concealed. Aleppo, Damascus, and above all, Cairo, are not
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second in this respect to our provincial capitals. Young girls are reserved there as every where else, because the discovery of a love adventure would cost them their lives; but married women give themselves up to pleasure with the more freedom, to indemnify themselves for the long and strict restraint they have endured, and because they have often just reasons for revenging themselves on their masters. In fact, from the practice of polygamy permitted by the Koran, the Turks, in general, are enervated very early, and nothing is more common than to hear men of thirty complaining of impotence. This is the malady for which they chiefly consult the Europeans, desiring them to give them *Mad-joun*, by which they mean provocatives. This infirmity is the more mortifying to them, as sterility is a reproach among the Orientals; they still retain for fecundity all the esteem of ancient times; and the best wish you can make a young girl, is that she may soon get a husband, and have a great number of children. From this prejudice they hasten their marriages so much, that it is not rare to see girls of nine or ten years old

married to boys of twelve or thirteen. It must however be confessed, that the apprehensions of libertinism, and the severity with which that is punished by the Turkish police, greatly contribute to these premature unions, which must likewise be reckoned among the causes of their early impotence. The ignorance of the Turks will not suffer itself to be persuaded on this head, and they are so irrational as to force nature, at the very time their health is impaired by excess. This also is to be ascribed to the Koran, in which the amorous prophet has taken care to insert a precept inculcating this species of duty, Montesquieu, therefore, is in the right, to assign polygamy as one of the causes of depopulation in Turkey; but it is one of the least considerable, as there are few but the rich who allow themselves a plurality of women; the common people, and especially those of the country, content themselves with one; and persons are sometimes to be met with, even among the higher ranks, who are wise enough to imitate their example, and confess that one wife is quite sufficient.

What we are able to learn of the domestic life

life of the husbands who have several wives, is neither calculated to make their lot envied, nor to give a high idea of this part of Mahomet's legislation. Their house is a perpetual scene of tumult and contention. Nothing is to be heard but quarrels between the different wives, and complaints made to the husband. The four legal married women complain that their slaves are preferred to them, and the slaves, that they are abandoned to the jealousy of their mistresses. If one wife obtains a trinket, a token of favour, or permission to go to the bath, all the others require the same, and league together in the common cause. To restore peace, the polygamist is obliged to assume the tone of a despot, and from that moment he meets with nothing but the sentiments of slaves, the appearance of fondness and real hatred. In vain does each of these women protest she loves him more than the rest; in vain do they fly, on his entering the apartments, to present him his pipe and his slippers, to prepare his dinner, to serve him his coffee; in vain, whilst he is effeminately stretched out upon his carpet, do they chase away the flies

which incommode him; all these attentions and careffes have no other object than to procure an addition to their trinkets and moveables, that if he should repudiate them, they may be able to tempt another husband, or find a resource in what becomes their only property. They are merely courtezans, who think of nothing but to strip their lover before he quits them; and this lover, long since deprived of desires, teized by feigned fondness, and tormented with all the listlessness of satiety, is far from enjoying, as we may well imagine, an enviable situation. The contempt the Turks entertain for their women, arises from this concurrence of circumstances, and it is evidently the effect of their own customs. For how should the women retain that exclusive love, which renders them most estimable, when so many share in the affections of their husband? How should they possess that modesty which constitutes their greatest virtue, when the most shocking scenes of debauchery are daily before their eyes? How, in a word, should they be endowed with the manners requisite to make them amiable, when no care what-
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ever is taken of their education; The Greeks at least derive this advantage from religion, that, being permitted to take but one wife at a time, they enjoy more domestic peace, though perhaps without approaching nearer to real happiness.

It is remarkable, that in consequence of the difference in religion, there exists between the Christians and Mahometans of Syria, and indeed of all Turkey, as marked a difference of character as if they were two distinct nations, living under different climates. Travellers, and our merchants, who on account of the habits of intimacy in which they live with both, are still better qualified to decide, agree that the Greek Christians are in general wicked and deceitful, abject in adversity, insolent in prosperity, and especially remarkable for levity and fickleness: the Mahometans, on the contrary, though haughty even to insolence, possess however a sort of goodness of heart, humanity, and justice; and above all, never fail to manifest great fortitude under misfortune, and much firmness of character. This contrast between men, living under the same sky,

sky, may appear surprising; but the prejudices of their education, and the influence of the government under which they live, sufficiently account for it. The Greeks, treated by the Turks with all the haughtiness and contempt they shew to their slaves, cannot but at last assume the character perpetually ascribed to them: they have been obliged to practise deceit, to escape from violence by cunning, and they have recourse to the meanest flatteries, because the weak must ever court the strong; they are dissemblers and mischievous, because he who cannot openly revenge himself, disguises his hatred; cowardly and treacherous, since he who cannot attack in front, naturally strikes behind; and insolent in prosperity, because they who attain wealth or power unworthily, are eager to revenge themselves by returning all the contempt they have received in the pursuit. I was one day observing to a very sensible monk, that among all the Christians, who in more modern times have been advanced to eminent stations in this country, not one of them has shewn himself worthy of his good fortune. Ibrahim was meanly avaricious;

cious; Sad-el-Kouri irresolute and pusillanimous, his son Randour, ignorant and insolent, and Rezk, cowardly and deceitful: his answer was, word for word, as follows; “ The Christians have not *hands* proper “ to manage the reins of government, be- “ cause, during their youth they have been “ continually employed in *beating cotton*, “ They resemble those who walk for the first “ time on high terraces, they grow giddy at “ seeing themselves so exalted, and as they “ are afraid they shall be forced to return to “ their olives and cheese, they are in haste “ to make all the profits they can. The “ Turks on the contrary, are accustomed to “ govern; they are masters habituated to “ their authority, and use it as if they had “ no fear of being deprived of it.” We must not forget, at the same time, that the Mahometans have the prejudices of fatalism instilled into them from their birth, and have a full persuasion that every thing is predestined. Hence they experience a security which moderates both desire and fear, and a resignation by which they are equally prepared for good and evil; they are habituated
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in a kind of apathy, which equally prevents them from regretting the past or providing against the future. Does the Mahometan suffer by any misfortune? Is he plundered? Is he ruined? he calmly says, "It was written," and submits, without a murmur, to the most unexpected transition from opulence to poverty. Even on the bed of death, nothing disturbs the tranquillity of his resignation, he makes his ablution, repeats his prayers, professes his belief in God, and the prophet; he tranquilly says to his son; "turn my head towards Mecca," and dies in peace. The Greeks, on the contrary, who believe that God may be prevailed on to change his purpose, by vows, fasting, prayer, and pilgrimages, live in the perpetual desire of obtaining some new blessing, the fear of losing some good they already possess, or tormented by regret for some duty omitted. Their hearts are a prey to every contending passion, nor do they avoid their destructive effects, except so far as the circumstances in which they live, and the example of the Mahometans enfeeble the prejudices of their childhood. We may add a remark equally true

true of both religions, that the inhabitants of the inland country have more integrity, simplicity, and generosity, and are in every respect of more amiable manners than those upon the sea-coast, no doubt because the latter continually engaged in commerce, have contracted, by their mode of life, a mercantile spirit, naturally inimical to all those virtues which are founded on moderation and disinterestedness.

After what I have said of the manners of the Orientals, we shall be no longer astonished that their whole character partakes of the monotony of their private life, and of the state of society in which they live. Even in the cities where we see most activity, as Aleppo, Damascus, and Cairo, all their amusements consist in going to the bath, or meeting together in coffee-houses, which only resemble ours in name. There, in a large room, filled with smoke, seated on ragged mats, the wealthier class of people pass whole days in smoking their pipes, talking of business, in concise phrases, uttered at long intervals, and frequently in saying nothing. Sometimes the dulness of this silent
assembly

assembly is relieved by the entrance of a singer, some dancing girls, or one of those story tellers they call *Nasbid*, who, to obtain a few Paras, relates a tale, or recites verses from some ancient poet. Nothing can equal the attention with which they listen to this orator; people of all ranks have a very extraordinary passion for this species of amusement. A European traveller is not a little surprized to see the Turkish sailors, when the weather is calm, assemble on the deck, and attentively listen for two or three hours together, to a declamation, which the most unexperienced ear must at once perceive to be poetry, from the exactness of the measure and the continually recurring rhymes. It is not in this alone that the common people of the east excel ours in delicacy. The populace even in the great cities, notwithstanding the turbulence of their dispositions, are never so brutal as we frequently see them with us, and they have the great merit of not being addicted to drunkenness, a vice from which even our country peasants are not free. Perhaps this is the only real advantage produced by the legislation of Mahomet: unless
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we may add the prohibition of games of chance, for which the Orientals have therefore no taste; chess is the only amusement of this kind they hold in any estimation, and we frequently find among them very skilful players.

Of all the different species of public exhibitions, the only one they know, and, which is common at Cairo alone, is that of strollers, who shew feats of strength like our rope-dancers, and tricks of slight of hand like our jugglers. We there see some of them eating flints, others breathing flames, some cutting their arms or perforating their noses, without receiving any hurt, and others devouring serpents. The people, from whom they carefully conceal the secrets of their art, entertain a sort of veneration for them, and call these extraordinary performances, which appear to have been very ancient in these countries, by a name which signifies *prodigy* or *miracle*. This propensity to admiration and readiness to believe the most extravagant tales, is a remarkable feature in the character of the Orientals. They receive, without hesitation or the least

shadow of doubt, the most wonderful things that can be told them, and if we regard the tales current among them, as many prodigies happen every day as have been ascribed to the age of the *Genii* and Fairies; the reason of which no doubt is, that being totally ignorant of the ordinary course of physical and moral causes, they know not the limits of probability and impossibility. Besides having been accustomed from their earliest youth to believe the absurd fables of the Koran, they are wholly destitute of any standard of analogy, by which to distinguish truth from falsehood. Their cruelty therefore arises from their ignorance, the imperfection of their education, and the nature of the government. To this credulity the extravagance of imagination which some have so much admired in their romances, is in a great measure to be attributed; but though they were deprived of this source, their works would still possess many brilliant ornaments. In general the Orientals are remarkable for a clear conception, an easy expression, a propriety of language in the things they are acquainted with, and a passionate and nervous style.

They

They have particularly a taste for moral sentences, and their proverbs shew they know how to unite the justness of observation, and profundity of the thought to an ingenuity and force of expression. Their conversation appears at first to have a sort of coldness, but when we are more accustomed to it, we find ourselves greatly attached to them. Such is the good opinion with which those who have had most communication with them have been impressed, that the greater part of our travellers and merchants, who have known them best, allow that they find in them a people of a more humane and generous character, and possessing more simplicity, and more refined and open manners, than even the inhabitants of European Countries, as if the Asiatics, having been polished long before us, still preserved the traces of their early improvement.

But it is time to terminate these reflexions; I shall only add one more, which is personal to myself. After having lived near three years in Egypt and Syria; after having been habituated to spectacles of barbarism and devastation; on my return to France, the sight of my own country had almost the same

effect on me as that of a foreign land; I could not avoid feeling a kind of surprize, when, traversing our provinces from the Mediterranean to the ocean, instead of those ruined countries and vast deserts to which I had been accustomed, I saw myself transported, as it were, into an immense garden, where cultivated fields, populous towns, and country seats continually succeeded each other during a journey of twenty days. When I compared our elegant and solid buildings, to the brick and mud-walled cottages I had left behind me, the opulence and industry of our cities to the ruinous and desolate condition of the Turkish towns, the plenty, peace, and power of this kingdom, to the poverty, anarchy, and feebleness of the empire of the Turks, to admiration succeeded pity, and to pity philosophical meditation. "Whence," said I to myself, "so striking a contrast
" between countries so much alike? Why so
" much life and activity here, and there so
" much improvidence and indolence? Why
" so great a difference between men of the same
" species?" Then, remembering that the countries I had seen so desolate and barbarous, were once flourishing and populous, a second reflection

reflection succeeded almost involuntarily. "If
 "formerly," said I, "the states of Asia en-
 "joyed this splendor, who can assure us that
 "those of Europe will not one day expe-
 "rience the same reverse?" This thought
 appeared to me distressing, yet, perhaps, it may
 be useful. For let us suppose that at the
 time when Egypt and Syria were at the sum-
 mit of their glory, some one had delineated
 to the people and governments of those coun-
 tries, their present deplorable state; let us
 suppose he had said to them, "Such is the
 "humiliating decline which must be the
 "consequence of such and such political
 "errors: thus shall injudicious laws deprive
 "you of all your wealth and all your power."
 Is it not probable that these governments
 would have taken care to avoid those fatal
 mistakes, which must conduct them to such
 utter destruction? What they have not done,
 it is in our power to do: their example may
 be a lesson to us. The great utility of history
 is, that by reviving the memory of past events,
 it enables the present time to anticipate the
 costly fruits of experience. Travels, in this
 sense, are no less useful, and have this advan-
 tage; that, as they treat of present objects, the
 observer

observer is better able than the posthumous historian, to discover the relations and causes of facts, and to explain the whole working, however complicated, of the political machine. By exhibiting, together with the present state of a country, the nature of the subsisting government, the narrative of the traveller may develop the causes of its greatness and decline, and furnish us with means to determine the actual duration of the empire. Seen under this point of view, Turkey is a country more especially instructive. The account I have given of it, shews how the abuse of authority, by causing the misery of individuals, becomes eventually destructive to the power of a state; and what we may safely venture to predict, will soon prove, that the ruin of a nation sooner or later recoils on those who have been the cause of it, and that the errors or crimes of those who govern cannot fail of their punishment, even from the very misery and wretchedness of those whom they have governed.

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